

# TECHNIQUE CLINIC

## Securing Pontics in an Essix Retainer

**W**hen opening anterior spaces for future prosthetic restoration, we place brackets on pontics and attach them to the archwire to maintain the spaces and improve the patient's esthetic appearance during treatment. After debonding, if the patient is not yet ready for prosthetic resto-

ration, we incorporate the same pontics into a thermoformed (Essix<sup>\*</sup>) retainer.

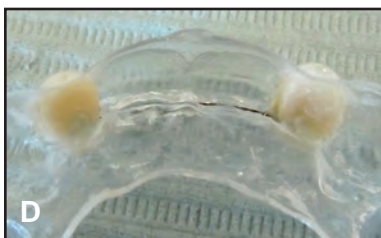
We have developed a simple technique to keep the pontics from being dislodged from the retainer, as illustrated here in a patient with missing lateral incisors:

1. Prepare each pontic by using a high-speed handpiece to create a small dimple with an undercut in the lingual surface.
2. Pour a plaster cast as usual. After trimming, affix the pontics to the cast with sticky wax (A).
3. Brush a bonding agent onto the lingual surface of each pontic and add a small amount of composite in and around the dimple.

Embed the ends of a section of .019" × .025" braided wire in the composite (B). Leave 1-2mm of space between the wire and the lingual surfaces of the natural teeth (red arrow, C). After curing, add a layer of composite to completely cover the ends of the wire on the pontics, smooth it with a bonding agent, and cure.

4. Thermoform an Essix retainer over the cast with the incorporated pontics and wire, then trim it as usual (D). The embedded wire prevents the pontics from becoming dislodged from the retainer.

The same technique can be used for single missing teeth. In that situation, the midpoint of the wire is bonded to the pontic and the wire is extended one tooth mesially and distally.



<sup>\*</sup>Trademark of Dentsply Raintree Essix, 6448 Parkland Drive, Sarasota, FL 34243; www.essix.com.



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