

TECHNIQUE CLINIC

First Molar Bypass Technique for Uprighting Ectopic Second Molars

In my practice, we always try to incorporate the second molars in our comprehensive fixed appliances. The second molars often erupt so ectopically, however, that we cannot run an archwire through the first molar bracket slot to the second molar slot. When we convert the first molar tube, it seems to require special attention throughout treatment.

We therefore devised the following method of engaging an ectopic second molar as soon as it is bracketed.

Procedure

Bypass the first molar buccal tube by running a round nickel titanium archwire (.016" or .018") outside and buccal to the tube. Tie the wire snugly to the outside of the first molar buccal tube with a metal ligature, and engage it fully into the second molar buccal tube (A).

Six weeks later, the second molar has usually been aligned enough to pass the same wire through the first molar tube and into the second molar tube (B). If not, retie the wire to the outside of the first molar, and try again for another appointment interval. After another six weeks, the two molars will be ready to accept a rectangular wire for more three-



dimensional control (C).

The first molar bypass has proven to be an effective, efficient, and patient-friendly method for gaining control of ectopic second molars. It works in both the upper and lower arches.

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