

TECHNIQUE CLINIC Easy Solutions for Two Common Problems with Essix Retainers

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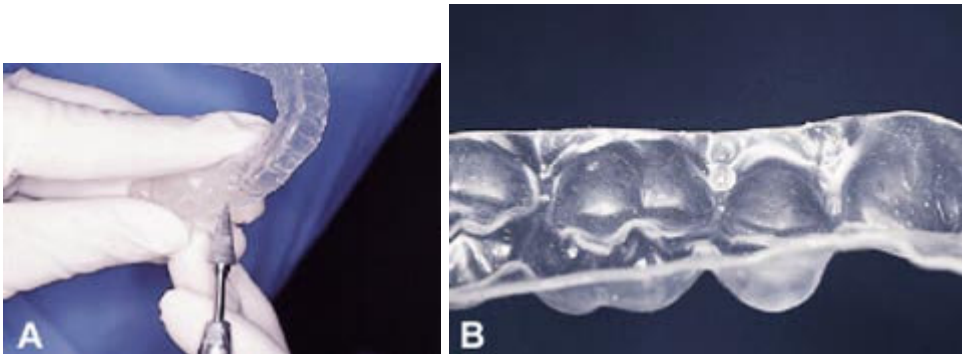
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Clear overlay Essix retainers are gaining popularity as an effective method of maintaining stability after orthodontic treatment. This article describes two common clinical problems and their solutions.

Problem 1

Inadequate retention. This can be caused by inflamed and enlarged gingivae or by the anatomy of the teeth.

Solution: Select two or three points on the retainer where undercuts can be made. Use a cone-shape acrylic bur in a slow-speed handpiece at each point (A). The friction will create enough heat to soften and deform the Essix material, forming a small dimple that will enhance retention (B).



Problem 2

Tooth movements. If the patient doesn't wear the retainer, the teeth may move enough so that it can not be reinserted.

Solution: Using a small scissor, cut the retainer incisogingivally on the buccal side of the affected teeth (C). This will provide the flexibility needed for the retainer to be reinserted. Instruct the patient to wear the retainer full-time until the teeth return to their original positions. A new retainer can then be fabricated to be worn at night only. □



FOOTNOTES

1 Trademark of Raintree Essix, Inc., 1069 S. Jeff Davis Parkway, New Orleans, LA 70125.