

PEARLS

(Editor's Note: If you have a clinical or practice management Pearl to share with your colleagues, send it to JCO, 1828 Pearl St., Boulder, CO 80302. Appropriate illustrations are welcome; a photograph of the author and a copyright transfer form are required prior to publication.)

Photography Aids

Here are two tips to make clinical photography easier.

Where do you store your expensive digital camera when it's not in use? Look in your closet for your old Lester Dine* camera's wooden wall mount. A little sanding is all that is required to adapt it for a digital camera (A).

Mirror fogging is often a problem when taking occlusal photographs. A mini-hair dryer** (B) can be held by the chairside assistant to keep the patient's breath from fogging the mirror. The dryer is small, sleek, and sanitary, and can be mounted on the wall near the camera and mirrors.



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**The Sharper Image, 650 Davis St., San Francisco, CA 94111.



Preventing Decalcification with a Fluoride Treatment

When decalcification occurs under brackets due to poor oral hygiene or other problems, the patient, parents, and referring dentist—not to mention the orthodontist—are all unhappy. Of course, we could elicit the cooperation of the general dentist in improving the patient's hygiene, but the patient and parents usually raise the excuse of inadequate time or money for more dental checkups.

I have recently begun using a 5% sodium fluoride varnish* on bonded teeth, especially in the maxillary anterior segment, with patients who seem to brush inadequately. The procedure can be easily handled by a chairside assistant in a few minutes, as follows:

1. Brush the teeth, retract the lips, and dry the tooth surfaces.
2. Paint the fluoride varnish on the teeth with a small brush, and let it dry for a couple of minutes.
3. Instruct the patient to leave the varnish on without rinsing, eating, or drinking for two hours.

This technique keeps decalcification to a minimum without disrupting the office routine.

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