



it all starts with a smile...

Interproximal Reduction or Enamel Stripping

As part of your treatment plan, the OPT Diagnostic Faculty will often recommend the use of interproximal reduction (IPR). We receive a number of requests for guidance regarding this procedure, so as part of our commitment to continuous improvement and education, we provide an outline of the practice below.

Laboratory Analysis Sheets

The OPT laboratory will indicate on an analysis sheet the areas where you will need to carry out the enamel stripping. The sheet will mark blue lines the areas concerned and specify the amount of reduction required, in millimetres and at what stage this needs to be undertaken. We will access each stage of your patients treatment with every new impression you send us. Normally, the laboratory will ask for 0.5 mm to be removed from the proximal contacts of the premolars, molars and the distal and mesial aspects of the canines.

Following analysis of the movements required, we will contact your surgery either by telephone or email to advise of the necessity for either attachments or IPR requirements at the next stage. We offer this service as we fully understand the amount of time required to carry out IPR and how this may affect your patient management and appointment times.

Recommended Method for IPR

Place a sterile paper clip between the teeth to be stripped below the contact point. Ensure that the paper clip has been either autoclaved or placed in cold sterilizing liquid for 20 minutes. This then acts as a protection for the gingivae.

Use a super torque high speed hand-piece and a flame 0.2mm tungsten carbide thin bur (available on request). Apply this flame tungsten carbide bur parallel to the long axis of the crown of the tooth to be reduced and go straight through the contact point. Please be very delicate, try to keep the bur steady and also try to keep a single sweeping motion. Do **not** saw backwards and forwards as you do not want to take away excess enamel when trying to keep the reduction to that specified on the lab sheet. Generally look for the easiest contact point to reduce. Once you have created a space then the other side of that tooth will be easier to strip as the tooth will tend to move into the space created when you apply pressure.

With a super torque hand piece it is relatively easy to make a clean smooth cut right through contact areas. Having done that on the distal of the 5 and mesial of the 6, progress to the mesial of the 5 and the distal of the 4, then the mesial of the 4 and the distal of the 3, then obviously the mesial of the 3, if required by the laboratory.

Smoothing the Enamel

Having done the initial cut through the contacts points with a tungsten carbide, proceed to use the sofex finishing discs, working from the thickest grade up to the polishing grade to gradually smooth off the surface of the enamel. If you feel the surface is quite rough prior to polishing, you can then take a flame diamond and gently smooth the surface. However, when you do so, please be careful not to take excessive material away.