

A Simplified Method of Fabricating a Habit Breaking Appliance

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INTRODUCTION

Deleterious habits like thumb sucking, tongue thrusting plays a major role in malocclusions, asymmetries and facial distortion.

Over the years various appliances have been in use to prevent/minimize these habits. Some of them are complicated and require lot of time in fabricating and are bulky to be worn. In cases like these it is worth to note that patient's compliance is a must in routine delivery of these habit breaking appliances, especially removable habit breaking appliances.

The following is one method which we have been using for many years in our clinical practices. This method was particularly proved to be useful in deciduous and mixed dentition, though aesthetically not pleasing but works well in majority of the cases. This appliance can also be combined in patients who are undergoing the active fixed appliance therapy.

FABRICATION AND METHOD

Take a required length of anterior band material .004x.015 and form the bands over the maxillary and mandibular anterior teeth. In most cases either just the upper anteriors or lower anterior teeth can be used [Table/Fig-1,2].

The bands can also be formed on the posterior teeth too, depending on the type of habit, for example the lateral/complex tongue thrust, thumb sucking etc.

We would prefer a weldable Begg bracket [Table/Fig-2], to weld lingually as they have larger weldable area and thus can easily be manipulated or altered. Lingual cleats can also be used, but they tend to break off and can get ingested or aspirated. Bondable brackets can not be used owing to the similar drawback like lingual cleats as they are not secured to the archwire as in case of fixed mechanotherapy.(The same has been explained in the previous sentence).

The sharpness of the brackets [Table/Fig-3], can be increased by slicing the bracket with a tapered fissured diamond bur. Alternatively, one can use a pin and ligature cutter to twist the edges of the bracket to achieve a similar effect [Table/Fig-4].

As mentioned earlier this method can be used in conjunction with active fixed appliance therapy but may be less effective in some cases, than the fixed tongue crib, which not only helps in habit breaking but also creates a space between the teeth for utilizing the force levels needed for retraction mechanics. (In most cases, tongue forces are interfered by the way of tongue crib in protruding the teeth further).



[Table/Fig-1]: Fabrication of anterior band material **[Table/Fig-2]:** Welded Begg brackets lingually **[Table/Fig-3]:** Cemented bands in the maxillary arch **[Table/Fig-4]:** Welded brackets on the labial surface

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