

Rubber Dam

for excellent results

This information sheet has been designed to inform you of the treatment that has been proposed in your individual case. Please take the time to read the information and please do not hesitate to ask if you any queries.

Dr Thai has recommended your new dental restoration be placed using the rubber dam technique. The benefits are many:

- Teeth/new filling is completely isolated from saliva, humidity, blood and tissue fluids
- Improved visibility for the dentist
- Better access for hard to reach teeth
- Patients tolerate procedures better – no need for constant swallowing or rinsing
- Protects patients lips, cheeks and tongue
- Multiple teeth can be filled at one time, saving time
- Protects dental staff from infection and air-borne organisms

Isolation Only the rubber dam completely isolates the teeth in the operating field from saliva, humidity, bleeding and tissue fluids. This is especially important when working with the new age tooth-coloured composite resin filling materials which are seriously affected by moisture contamination. All of the world experts agree that the use of rubber dam is an essential part of successful adhesive dentistry in that it provides a clean dry field, ensuring that the bonding procedure will not be compromised. Composite resins restorations placed without rubber dam are at serious risk of moisture contamination leading to recurrent decay and will almost certainly have a reduced lifespan.

Improved Visibility The contrast between the isolated teeth and the blue/green rubber dam produces improved visibility that results in better cavity preparations and superior restorations.

Access The rubber dam provides tissue retraction which allows better access to those areas of the mouth that are hard to reach. This is particularly important in patients who suffer with a severe gag reflex. Providing high quality dentistry for such patients without using rubber dam is almost impossible and despite their initial apprehension most such patients find dental treatment far less stressful with rubber dam.

What is Rubber Dam?

Rubber dam is a very thin sheet of latex that is placed over the teeth in the area being restored. The teeth protrude through very small holes made in the latex. The sheet is then stretched out creating a dam that isolates the teeth from the rest of your mouth. It is removed when the restoration is ready to be adjusted and polished.

The rubber dam technique allows the dentist to work in a clean field with better visibility – it saves valuable time, protects the patient from injury and guards the dentist against infection.

Although some patients initially find the rubber dam technique a little unusual most settle into it quite quickly - many patients feel so relaxed that they actually fall asleep.

Often, a rubber mouth prop is also used allowing the patient to relax with trying to keep their mouth open constantly.

Patient Acceptance The dam not only protects patients by preventing debris and foreign objects falling down the back of the throat but it also protects the soft tissues, keeping the tongue, lips and cheeks out of the way making dental procedures much safer. Because the water is trapped in the rubber dam and carried away in the suction the patient also does not have the stress of choking on water at the back of the mouth. In fact rubber dam actually produces a feeling of separation from the work being done, allowing the patient to feel so relaxed that many actually fall asleep.

A Time Saver Rubber dam is quick and simple to apply and time is saved when the patient's mouth is free of moisture and debris. With rubber dam in place there is no need for the patient to continually rinse and the use of cotton rolls is avoided saving drying time before placing restorations.

Latex Allergy If you suffer from an allergy to latex you should inform the dentist – there is now latex- free rubber dam that can be used for your safety.

Protection Against Infection The rubber dam helps to protect the dentist and nurse from cross-infection by air-borne organisms – there is about a 90% reduction in the number of air-borne organisms in the aerosol from high-speed turbines.