SOFT-TISSUE MANAGEMENT FOR ACCURATE IMPRESSIONS

RETRACTION CORD WITH HEMOSTATIC AGENT
- Most popular and least expensive method.
- Deep preps may require more than one cord, and the cord can fray – interfering with the quality of the impression or leaving behind debris. There is also a risk of damaging epithelial attachment.
- Can be technique sensitive and messy, may require deeper preps, and may be uncomfortable for the patient.

RETRACTION PASTE
- Easy to use and a somewhat faster process.
- Paste is less traumatic and more comfortable for the patient.
- Contains a hemostatic agent and can be combined with the cord technique.
- Drawbacks include displacement and potential interference with impression materials if not adequately rinsed before the impression is made.
Successful cosmetic and restorative dentistry relies on making accurate impressions. Without them, crowns – whether full coverage or implant – and veneer margins may not be accurate enough, and thus, less esthetic. Both traditional and digital impressions have the same requirements for capturing the anatomy in such a way that restorations are natural looking and will prevent subsequent problems, such as long-term discomfort, potential malalignment of the occlusion, microleakage, food getting trapped, difficulty cleaning, and ultimately, periodontal disease. Depending on the restoration, margins may be equigingival or subgingival. Subgingival margins often result in bleeding, which also must be managed or will jeopardize the quality of the final impression as well as the restoration.

Capturing and recording the gingival margin, surrounding tissues, the preparation, and adjacent teeth can be successful only if soft tissue is properly managed. Soft-tissue management can be accomplished using a variety of techniques, including use of retraction cord, retraction paste, or a soft-tissue diode laser.

Managing soft tissue in order to create the most accurate impression can be challenging, and each method has its advantages and disadvantages. The goal for any clinician is to find the technique that best controls the soft tissue and allows tooth preparation margins to be accurately captured in the impression.