

BOOK REVIEW

Albers Tooth-Colored Restoratives: Principles and Techniques

Harry F. Albers, ninth edn.; ISBN 1 55009 155 7; BC Decker Inc; 2002

This book sets out to provide 'primer' material information and a guide to techniques used in the provision of tooth-coloured restorations. This is achieved quite well, with the practical aspects of the book distilled from the author's involvement in the study groups and accompanied by a large number of illustrations. The text included clinical tips rarely found elsewhere and was written in a user-friendly way for a target group of undergraduate dental students and 'seasoned' practitioners. It will certainly be helpful as a clinical guide for these groups and each book is accompanied by a CD-ROM containing the complete text and illustrations.

Particular highlights of this book included the discussion about curing lights, advice on their selection and maintenance, practical tips for storage and shelf-life of materials, finishing techniques for tooth-coloured materials and clinical aspects of aesthetics. In addition there were four very useful appendices on nomenclature for curing composite resin, the universal restorative tray, magnification and air abrasion.

The placement of indirect restorations was limited to a short paragraph and the reader would have benefited from a chapter on this popular topic. The title of this book ideally should be altered to 'Direct tooth-coloured restorations' as this would clearly explain to the potential reader the techniques covered.

The science and techniques related to tooth-coloured restorative materials are developing rapidly and it is difficult to keep abreast of recent innovations but unfortunately the references cited were not always current and this was particularly noteworthy both in

the chapter on Posterior Composite Resin Restorations and in Chapter One where it was erroneously stated that light-cured composite resins shrink towards the curing light.

While the book benefits greatly from the author's practical tips the converse is true to some extent. He recommends using hydrogen peroxide as a pretreatment for relatively clean teeth before fissure sealant. As hydrogen peroxide affects the bond of composite resin to enamel this is not usually recommended and an alternative cleaning agent would be preferable. It is also suggested that there is no required minimum thickness of posterior composite resin and again this may lead to failure in areas of occlusal contact. Flowable composite resins are defined as 'less filled' composite resins. This is unclear and may be misleading as flowable composite resins have a higher volume filler loading than micro-filled composite resins, a frequent area of confusion.

The author tries hard to give detailed and comprehensive clinical steps but this has led to a degree of repetition in some sections, e.g. the section on glass ionomer and composite resin materials, and also aesthetics where cross-referencing would have been useful.

In summary, the book achieves its goal as a clinical guide for practitioners and undergraduates and takes materials science away from inaccessible tomes into the clinical area. I hope that the next edition of this book includes a comprehensive update of its references and takes this publication further into the 21st century.

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