

Reconditioning of Ormco Wire Cutters (11/00)

Personnel at the Ramstein AB dental clinic in Germany recently reported a problem to DECS that occurred when using an orthodontic instrument. While a clinician was using a Mini-Distal End Cutter (DEC) from Ormco, the cut section of an archwire was propelled into the patient's mucosa and had to be



surgically removed. The DEC (item number 803-0501 in Ormco's catalog) is a pliers-shaped instrument used to cut round and rectangular orthodontic wires distal to buccal tubes. The instrument has a "hold" feature that is intended to hold the cut piece of wire to prevent it from dropping into the oral cavity. In this particular case, the hold feature did not function properly and the wire injured the patient. In attempting to determine why

the cutters did not retain the wire, DIS contacted the manufacturer and received important information that personnel should know about Ormco wire cutters.

Instructions provided with the DEC note that "cutting instruments that are used frequently (determined by provider) should be reconditioned every six to nine months." Ormco recommends reconditioning for all their wire-cutting instruments. The reconditioning (which may involve parts replacement, resurfacing, sharpening, polishing, buffing, and lubrication) should ensure that the instrument cuts efficiently and retains the separated piece of wire. It is important to note that the cost of reconditioning an instrument may vary, depending on its type and existing condition. Ormco provided to DIS the cost of various reconditioning services, however, facilities should contact Ormco for a current price quote before sending instruments in for service.



For instruments older than 5 years old (identified by the fact they have no lot number engraved on the inside handle), servicing and repair includes replacing the tip - \$39.00
For the tip-brazed instruments (i.e., those with no screws in the tip), the tips are sharpened - \$24.00
For AEZ® replaceable-tip instruments, the tips are replaced - \$39.00
For re-serrating the tip surfaces - \$20.00

If reconditioning is necessary, the company can be contacted at the following address and telephone number:

Ormco Corporation
1332 South Lone Hill Avenue
Glendora, CA 91740
Attn: Repair Dept
(800) 672-5968
www.ormco.com

While it is encouraging that the manufacturer has recently included an information booklet with the wire cutters that describes its proper care and use, it should be noted that there is no reference to the size(s) of wire that can be cut. Also, the booklet uses a small font size when discussing reconditioning and sharpening. As a result, clinicians and staff could easily overlook this guidance. DIS has recommended to Ormco that it make specific reference in its product booklet to the size(s) of wire that are appropriate for cutting with the instrument. In addition, the company should list its recommendations for reconditioning and sharpening in bold distinctive letters for ease of reading. DIS also recommends that the NCOIC of Dental Logistics at dental clinics brief personal on the proper use and care of the wire cutters, and that clinicians always make a test cut before using them to ensure that the "hold" feature works properly.