

A Treatise on Suspected Allergies to Various Plastics

All Ortho-Tain's products are manufactured with plastics whose ingredients have U.S. Food and Drug Administration acceptance for medical applications and food packaging. Every Ortho-Tain appliance has a batch number assigned to it and affords Ortho-Tain the ability to track each appliance through the entire manufacturing and handling process. It is also strongly recommended that the dental professional that issues any appliance to a patient record that batch number. Also any intermediate dealer or distributor of Ortho-Tain's products should record the batch number of all appliances issued to offices and clinics.

If any allergic reaction to an appliance is suspected, the batch number and the specific size and type ('C' series, 'G' series, 'N' series, etc) of the appliance should be reported to Ortho-Tain. Ortho-Tain uses many different plastics in the various products it manufactures and the most efficient means of identification is by batch numbers, size, and type of appliance.

If the dental professional knows that a specific patient is highly allergic to many chemicals, metals and food, etc, it is recommended that a call to Ortho-Tain be made prior to issuing an appliance to such a patient. Ortho-Tain can make recommendations in order to eliminate or minimize any possible reactions.

Most suspected allergy reactions to plastics used in the manufacturing of our appliances are most often false alarms and are usually due to other factors that mimic the symptoms of an allergy. The following are the most common of these factors causing look-alike allergy symptoms:

- 1) The patient may create a vacuum in the mouth while wearing an appliance. This vacuum holds the oral mucosa of the cheeks in tight contact with the outer buccal shields of the appliance. This in turn blocks the secretion glands located in the cheeks, which may cause the mucosa to have multiple red spots or large red areas. If the patient is told not to create this vacuum, those red areas will disappear.
- 2) The patient does not rinse and clean the appliance before and after each use, and bacteria and debris can collect on the surface of the appliance, which in turn can irritate the oral tissues.
- 3) If the patient allows the interior of the box in which the appliance is stored to accumulate bacteria, fungus and debris, this can then collect on the surface of the appliance which can irritate the patient's oral tissues. Patients should be instructed to keep their appliance and its box clean at all times.

- 4) If any of the areas of the appliance, particularly if the margins dig into and irritate the soft tissues or, gingival areas of the patient, the interfering plastic of the appliance should be trimmed with a sharp carbide acrylic bur or a green stone on a lathe and smoothed with an acrylic bur afterward. The patient should be told to call the dental professional if any areas of the tissues are being irritated by an appliance, so that it can be adjusted promptly.
- 5) Patients that have allergies and those with asthma should be warned to keep the appliance and its box clean at all times. Patients with seasonal allergies such as hay fever, etc. may be instructed to wear the appliance an extra hour each day and leave it out at night during the allergy season.

Any suspected allergy not due to any of the above similarly appearing reactions should contact Ortho-Tain at 1-800-469-0737, 1-800-541-6612, fax 1-787-799-5074 or email orthotain@aol.com