



DOMINION ENDODONTICS

Greetings!



specialist member

If I have not met you yet, my name is Debbie Yeh and I recently joined Dominion Endodontics as their new associate endodontist. Previously, I was practicing in Bethesda, MD, but I am excited to now be serving patients across the Potomac in Northern Virginia. I know I have big shoes to fill replacing the recently-retired Dr. Frank Portell, but I'm sure you'll see that I am more than up to the challenge! As part of my introduction, I wanted to discuss a topic in this newsletter that can cause any dentist anxiety: file separation.

If you routinely perform root canals in your office, you may be able to empathize with that dreadful feeling of breaking a file. While instrument separation can be quite discouraging, it is a common endodontic complication that troubles dentists at all levels of experience, even endodontists. As one of my mentors used to say, "if you're not breaking files, you're not doing root canals." Whether you perform root canals or not in your own office, I thought it would be worthwhile to share a few tips below on avoiding instrument separation.

8 Rules to Avoid File Separation

- 1. Always have Straight Line Access-** This means having a direct line of insertion into the canal. It is important to not only consider curvature in the root, but also the curvature it takes to enter the canal.
- 2. Always Maintain a Glide Path-** A "glide path" is achieved when you have a clear route from orifice to apex. Ideally, you should be able to easily slide a 15k file straight to the apex before using any rotary files.
- 3. Always Inspect the File-** Check an instrument for wear after each use. If it's unwinding, TOSS IT! You'll be glad you did.
- 4. Always Keep Count of File Usage-** Most rotary files are recommended for single use by the manufacturer. Some can be sterilized and used twice, but can they be used 3 times? How about 4 times? Keep track and try not to overuse a file, even if it looks ok. Otherwise you're counting on it breaking at some point.
- 5. Never Instrument a Dry Canal-** Instrumenting dry promotes the accumulation of dentin chips, which clog the file flutes and increase stress on the instrument. Fluid removes these debris and can also lubricate the file.
- 6. Never Push a Rotary File-** Apical pressure on a rotary file can lock the tip and cause unwinding until it breaks from the rotation. It can also cause excessive stress on a file as it rotates around a curve with the same result.
- 7. Never Stop the File in the Canal-** This loss of momentum puts more stress on a file heightening the chance of separation.
- 8. Never Skip a File in your Sequence-** Rotary instruments come in a sequence that is specifically designed to avoid overworking the files. Putting in too large a file in an underprepared canal puts significant stress on the instrument and can cause file breakage.

Looking forward to meeting everyone!

Debbie Yeh DDS
Diplomate, Board of Endodontics

Dominion Endodontics

Alexandria
(703) 836-0006
1650 King St., Ste 300,
Alexandria, VA 22314

Arlington
(703) 940-3070
4350 Fairfax Dr., Ste 640,
Arlington, VA 22203

Falls Church
(703) 534-0330
7115 Leesburg Pike, Ste 309,
Falls Church, VA 22043

<http://www.dominionendodontics.com>