

## Success with air-polishing

Christina Chatfield explains how she has embraced air-polishing for both stain and biofilm removal

**W**hen I opened Dental Health Spa in 2007, I wanted to market something different to the Brighton consumer that other dental practices were not offering to their hygiene patients, so I invested in two air-polishing units. Was it new? No, it had been around for 30 years, so just about my entire clinical life. In fact, way back in 1999, I had one in my practice, where I had a nurse all the time, but I knew nothing about it other than it tasted foul, was messy and a nightmare to maintain (or so I had heard). No one had shown me how to use it, I had never been taught anything about it during my training at dental school – my boss did not tell me, or indicate to me why I had one. Yet air polishing is the very thing that I have used to build my practice over the last seven years.

### An evolution

All technology evolves, from twin tubs to automatic washing machines, manual toothbrushes to the all singing oscillating, pulsating and sonic technology we have today. Things improve because research shows us what we want or need more. It's about comfort, aesthetics, health and feeling good.

Move forward 30 years with EMS and we can see how the powders have evolved, enhancing comfort, efficacy, ease of use and, more importantly, removal of biofilm.

Some of my patients say their teeth are sensitive. The sensitivity they commonly refer to is from ultrasonic treatment. I am not talking about the patient who needs non-surgical root surface debridement, I am referring to our recall and maintenance patients or people with lots of stain.



**Christina Chatfield** is a clinical director and hygienist at Dental Health Spa in Brighton. She qualified as a hygienist in Dundee in 1982 and moved to Brighton in 1994.

She is the DH&T Hygienist of Year 2012 winner.



Figure 1: Before using Air-Flow

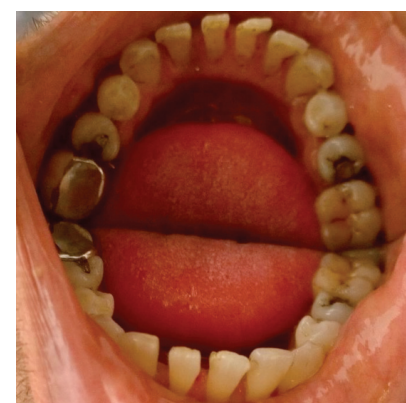


Figure 2: After using Air-Flow



Figures 3-5: Using the Air-Flow



Figure 4: Using the Air-Flow

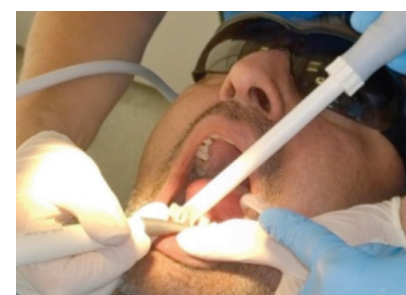


Figure 5: Using the Air-Flow

So, initially we thought of air polishers just for stain removal. With the latest family of powders, the move away from the larger grain size of classic sodium bicarbonate (at 65 microns) to smaller particle 'new kid on the block' erythritol, (at 14 microns) means that patient comfort, taste and efficacy are instantly improved. This can be used on both stain and biofilm above and below the gum margin for our routine maintenance patients, with pockets less than 4mm or in the Perio-Flow handpiece for deeper biofilm disruption/removal. We can reduce the bacterial load at every appointment, sub- and supra- gingival, as well as remove stain from the hard to reach places and from dentine, quickly and effectively. No salty taste, no mess – what's there not to like!

### Two powders

For me, it's down to two powders: firstly, Comfort, the new supra gingival sodium bicarbonate powder from EMS. It has the same efficiency as the previous Classic powder, but more comfortable on the soft tissues with a smaller grain size (40 microns) for the removal of supra gingival plaque and heavy extrinsic staining with a

fresh lemon taste.

And for the whole mouth, the Plus powder, with erythritol, is great both sub- and supra- gingivally. This extra fine particle size of only 14 microns, makes it great to use on all the soft tissues, including the tongue and in pockets, disrupting and killing biofilm and removing stain. This can be used on both dentine and composites too. So, one powder that does everything and no changing of powder!

### Case studies

1. Hamish (Figures 1-5): worn lower anteriors, dentine exposed, heavily restored and crowned posterior upper and lower dentition, perio good, no calculus, lots of stain.

How would you normally treat him? Prior to Air-Flow Powder Plus, lots of scraping and abrasive polishing paste. A nightmare to treat and how long would it take?

This took 20 minutes, a much more pleasant experience for both Hamish and myself. It is easy to use and the softer powder meant that it was not traumatic to any of the soft tissues both supra- and sub- gingivally. A great all round mouth

detox, tongue clean and stain removal.

First thing I say to my clients as I sit them up before they even look is: 'How does it feel?' That feeling of clean, sells the Air-Flow before they have even seen the results, and then it's the wow factor!

2. Ben (Figures 6-10): he continued to lose attachment and mobility despite ongoing periodontal treatment. He is an unresponsive, chronic, generalised, severe periodontitis case. He has previously seen a periodontist, had been treated non-surgically, but was reluctant to have any teeth taken out. Ben's contributing factors are his stress levels, his bruxism, oral hygiene due to poor access and his tolerance to maintenance therapy. He is an ex-smoker, having stopped six years



Figure 6: Ben in occlusion



Figure 7: Bone loss upper left quadrant



Figure 8: Surgery upper left quadrant

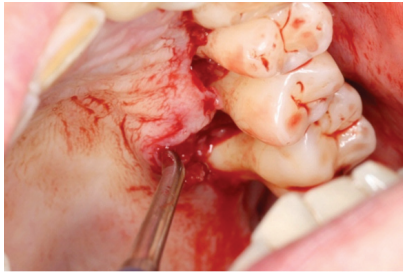


Figure 9: Surgery upper left quadrant



Figure 10: Post surgery

ago. I took Ben to King's as part of my diploma in periodontology. He had five molar extractions and a further course on non-surgical intervention more than 24 hours under local anesthetic (LA) and combined antibiotic therapy. I treated Ben in practice with Perio-Flow/Air-Flow, purely for biofilm management. He

was assessed at eight weeks and surgical intervention was decided for the upper left quadrant and a Michigan splint to replace his existing soft splint.

At nine months post-treatment, Ben's tolerance would still be an issue. He is now treated with Air-Flow sub- and supra- gingival and his pockets remain

below 4mm. My anxiety levels used to rise when treating Ben (as did his). He is now on a three monthly maintenance programme, and Air-Flow is our treatment of choice. It is quick, 100% effective and comfortable.

### Market your product

Once you have a great product, you need to keep up-to-date and, like anything else, you need to market it.

I use radio advertising to market air-polishing and flyers, which I am about to update and introduce Air-Flow as our premium service. We are launching a Spa Plan for both our dental and our hygiene only clients and will be offering this premium service to our Spa Plan members. I bought the Air-Flow Master

Piezon, having listened to the lectures at Europerio 7, mainly for my perio and implant patients. I now have two additional hygienists working alongside me. We have the Air-Flow Master Piezon in one of the surgeries, which means I now need another because we all see the benefits and it is key for developing my Spa Plan client database. I have additional marketing support from Dental Beauty TV that means my website is being updated with fantastic video clips, which in turn improves the Google search engine, and these can also be sent out as a download in newsletters.

Hands-on courses are essential to understand how in practical terms to both use and maintain Air-Flow and Perio-Flow. Sharing experiences with other colleagues will help you develop skills and ideas as to how to market them and up sell to your existing clients. **DH&T**

For information on the next Prophylaxis for Profit Courses visit [www.optident.co.uk](http://www.optident.co.uk). Or to book a place, call Lyndsay at Optident on 01943 8868 or email [Lyndsay.beaumont@optident.co.uk](mailto:Lyndsay.beaumont@optident.co.uk).