

Helpful Hints for Treatment Coordinators: *Learn to be flexible;* when dealing with doctors, patients/parents, schedules and life in general you as the Treatment Coordinator need to be prepared and ready to *switch gears* at the “drop of a hat”. You may have been taught “step by step” how to do the initial exam, but you must be able to adapt to the situation at hand. It is acceptable to change your sequence based on the patient arriving late or the doctor being held up in the operatory. The bottom line should be the patient/parent understanding the need for orthodontics and how your doctor and team will make it happen. If you show signs of stress because *things are just not happening the way they should*, the patient/parent will notice it. Keep your cool and improvise.

Helpful Hint for Records: Store intra-oral photo mirrors a folded heating pad to eliminate fogging. It is faster than heating water, rinsing and drying. After sterilization, wrap the mirror in a tissue or bag, so as you remove the mirror from the heating pad, the patient perceives the mirror has been properly processed. You can cover the heating pad with a white towel for a more professional look or keep in a drawer to keep the counter clutter-free.

Helpful Hints for Clinicians: We frequently see clinicians changing gloves to reach in a drawer to retrieve colored ties or other items. Often, a change in routine can prevent the need to change gloves during a procedure. At the tooth brushing station, have your choice of colored ties clearly displayed with a sign saying, "Choose Your Colors". Teach patients to come in 5 minutes early to brush their teeth and choose their colors so when the patient is seated, they announce their color preference right away. (No more waiting for the patient to decide!) Then the clinician can retrieve the appropriate colored ties/chain before touching the patient. When the procedure is clearly indicated on the treatment card, all materials/wires/ties can be retrieved prior to beginning work on the patient.

Helpful Hints for Scheduling and Financial Coordinators: Buy cordless headsets. Not only is it better for your neck and shoulders, but also keeps your hands free to do other tasks while on the telephone.

Helpful Hints for the Financial Coordinator: Encourage your patients to use automatic credit card or direct draft from checking account. With the automatic posting features of most software systems, the time spent posting payments is reduced. Patient delinquency is also decreased because all of the payments are automatically made on the correct day of the month.

Helpful Hints for the Team: As a team develop a list of valid overrides for scheduling that are approved by the Doctor, clinical team and front office team. This will reduce scheduling conflict between the front and back office.

Helpful Hints for All: Everyday ask yourself, “How can I do my job better today?” “What can I do to improve the situation?” and “How can I support others on my team?” Work on YOU, before you work on them.

Helpful Hints for Staff's/Doc's Sneakers: Apply a paste of automatic dishwashing detergent mixed with hot water to the shoes. Allow to soak at least 30 minutes, then scrub surface with a nailbrush or toothbrush. Rinse well and allow to dry. Dry the shoes in direct sun. You can also put the shoes in the washing machine with several old white towels and launder as usual after soaking and brushing. To keep the shoes clean, set them on paper and apply several coats of spray starch or fabric protector. They will stay clean longer and soil will wash out more easily