

Are You Bipolar?

by Ian Shuman, DDS, FAGD



A CLOSER LOOK: Before you purchase an expensive soft tissue laser... read this article.

Question:

What goes, "Snap, crackle, pop"?

- The "Rice Crispies" jingle.
- The sound of your knees first thing in the morning.
- Gingival tissue being fried by a monopolar electro-surgical unit.
- All of the above.

The correct answer is d. However, the really correct answer is c. Just like dental school-two correct possible answers!) The crackling sound that electrically charged tips make on surgerized tissue is daunting at best. In addition, besides the sweet, toasty fragrance of sulcus flambe, and the encouraging effect that charred, blackened tissue has on your patient there is really nothing nice about treating gingival tissue with a traditional, monopolar electro-surgical device. The same can be said of soft tissue lasers, except they just cost a whole lot more.

If you refer to the crown and bridge article series ("TPD," Sept.- Nov. 2000), I recommended the use of the monopolar electro-surgical units in order to manage soft tissue. Well, my opinion of electro-surgery remains the same. However, I have recently discovered a system that calls its home to 90% of all the neurosurgical operating rooms worldwide. It has made a rather quiet entrance into the dental world and is now being enjoyed by dental practitioners worldwide. It is... drum roll please... Bident Bipolar Electro-surgical System.

The Bident system was invented by veteran neurosurgeon Dr. Jerry Malis and has been distributed to the medical community by Johnson and Johnson since 1983.

Dr. Malis was constantly seeking improvements in the use of electro-surgery in order to make it a safe, effective, and efficient technique.

He found traditional monopolar electro-surgery to be dangerous to surrounding healthy brain tissue because of the incredible heat output that radiated from the working tip.

In addition, the old monopolar systems could not touch bone because of the historical risk of osteoradio-necrosis (OUCH!). Like his colleagues, he tried using lasers but didn't like the loss of tactile feedback or the damage to the surrounding healthy tissue from laser heat output. In addition, the charring of cut tissue slowed healing and was just not acceptable.

What was needed was a device that could be used without making the patient part of the electrical circuit (what the heck did you think the grounding plate was for anyway?). Dr. Malis also wanted a device that could cut soft tissue, generate a minimum amount of heat, never spark, thereby avoiding a messy O.R. explosion (anesthetic gases are highly flammable), be used in a dry or wet environment, and be so atraumatic as to promote rapid healing and avoid all that post-op Advil.

Here are just some of the advantages of this revolutionary system:

- A patented aperiodic waveform that produces gentle cutting and clean coagulation in a wet or dry field.
- No grounding plates or pads needed. The patient is never in the circuit.
- Foot switch control of cut/coagulation options.
- Eliminates heat and current spread by operating at less than one quarter of that required for monopolar electrosurgery.
- Near elimination of charring and tissue shrinkage.
- The ability to contact bone, tooth, restorations, and implants without concern.

The Bident Bipolar system costs a little more than monopolar units but by spending a few extra shekels, you'll avoid shocking your patient and damaging adjacent tissue or causing osteonecrosis. Plus, you can use it on patients with pacemakers. This is especially useful since they are often the ones who require crown lengthening around fractured teeth or grow blood-pressure-med-induced-gingival- hyperplasia and need that acre of gingiva removed. If you're leaning toward lasers, save yourself \$30,000 and buy the very affordable Bident system. Then, invest most of that \$25,000 and spend the leftovers on a relaxing tax-deductible seaside vacation, sipping margaritas, playing a round or two of your favorite game, partying all night and listening to some of your favorite dental speakers. **(Wait a minute... you can do all that in Destin this March!)**

Order one now and play with it until March. Then come to my presentation in Destin and I'll show you all the cool ways to use this system to its maximum potential. You will definitely make a fabulous return on your investment. And you won't be shocked in the process.

You can order the Bident system by calling Bident International at 1-800-469-6369 or you can order online at www.bident.com.

Dr. Shuman is Associate Clinical Editor of "The Profitable Dentist" and currently evaluates and reviews dental products and materials. Together with Excellence in Dentistry, he is currently producing a continuing education video series featuring live clinical procedures.

Dr. Shuman also has an in-office, over-the-shoulder program that is designed to improve and strengthen clinical skills. This is successfully accomplished by demonstrating a variety of techniques using an array of products and materials.

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