DENTAL WATERLINE PROTOCOLS & MAINTENANCE

There is no one-step “magic bullet” for controlling microbiological contamination in dental unit waterlines. Following regular purging protocols and routine maintenance procedures is critical. The following guidelines for dental delivery units should be observed at all times:

1. Purge all water-bearing lines at the beginning of each work day by flushing the waterlines thoroughly with water for a minimum of two (2) minutes. This should include all handpiece and syringe lines, quick-disconnect lines, et cetera.

2. Purge all air and waterlines for a minimum of 20 seconds after each patient, as recommended by the CDC and Canadian guidelines.

3. Do not use waterline heaters, as they serve to increase the growth rate of any microorganisms that might be present in the lines tremendously.

4. Never use water from a standard dental delivery system during surgical procedures. Instead, use sterile water or saline delivered by sterile means, such as autoclavable bulb syringes, or autoclavable or disposable sterile tubing.

5. Spot-check water quality throughout the operatory environment at least quarterly by submitting water samples to a laboratory for HPC testing, or by using an in-office testing product like the HPC Total Count Sampler from EMD Millipore.

Further, if using any type of water filtration system—whether plumbed directly to the dental delivery unit or for filling dental bottles—it’s important to follow maintenance procedures and change the filters at appropriate intervals, as specified by the manufacturer.

ADAPTED FROM THE BOOK ON DENTAL WATER

This comprehensive and easy-to-understand book helps dental practitioners understand how using the right water can help to improve patient care, staff productivity and practice profitability, while also protecting the investments they’ve made in their equipment and appliances.

DentalWaterTesting.com

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