

Air Abrasion

What is air abrasion? Air abrasion, also called "micro-abrasion" and kinetic cavity preparation, is a method of tooth structure removal considered to be an effective alternative to the standard dental drill. Air abrasion technology functions much like the sand-blasting technique used to clear graffiti from walls. An air abrasion handpiece blows a powerful air stream of tiny, fine aluminum oxide particles out of its tip onto tooth structure. Air abrasion uses the kinetic energy principle, in which particles bounce off the tooth and blasts the decay away. It most commonly is used to prepare various types of cavities to be restored with composites, or "white fillings." Air abrasion also can be effectively used to repair cracks and discolorations, prepare tooth surfaces for bonding procedures, and perform additional procedures.

What are its advantages?

Air abrasion procedures are virtually painless, which, in most cases, eliminates the need for an anesthetic injection. Air abrasion systems produce no vibration and no heat from friction. The technology can't harm soft mouth tissue and they operate very quietly. Because air abrasion cuts tooth surfaces with the utmost precision, it removes less tooth than the drill and it reduces the risk of enamel micro-fracturing. In other words, the advantages are more of your tooth is preserved, there is little or no discomfort, no anesthetic numbness is needed, and treatment time is usually shorter.

How does air abrasion work?

Air abrasion procedures can leave an accumulation of harmless, dusty particle debris in the patient's mouth, resulting in a gritty feeling that is eradicated by rinsing. Your dentist may require you to wear protective glasses during the procedure, and a rubber dam may be applied inside your mouth and around the tooth area being treated to serve as a particle barrier. To reduce dust buildup, the dentist or dental assistant may use a vacuum hose or a water spray technique while administering air abrasion.

Is air abrasion suitable for everyone?

Yes. It is an especially good option for children who may be afraid of the needle, and the noise, and vibration of a regular dental drill. However, there are some treatments, like crown and bridge preparation, that still require the use of a dental drill. Air abrasion can't be used as an alternative in every procedure.

Who will provide my air abrasion treatment?

We have been trained in restorative dentistry techniques and can perform several procedures with the use of air abrasion technology.