

Common CAD/CAM Questions & Answers

Q: Why should CAD/CAM interest me?

A: CAD/CAM is an exciting area of Dentistry that is growing in different areas every day. It offers many advantages to the dentist, assistant, and patient. The process is very precise, and significantly reduces adjustments. Best of all, patients love the digital impression process!

Q: What are the different types of CAD/CAM systems?

A: There are basically two types of systems; acquisition only and scan and mill. Acquisition only systems allow the user to take a digital impression and send the file to a center where a model is made for a laboratory technician to make a final restoration. Alternatively, a scan and mill system allows for a restoration to be fabricated and stained and glazed in the office. This type of system provides a benefit to the patient in that only one appointment is necessary. It does however require skilled team members and additional chairtime the day the restoration is made.

Q: How do I know which type of CAD/CAM is best for my office?

A: This is a very specific decision for each office. Either option has advantages in that CAD/CAM restorations offer a precise fit, less adjustment time, and esthetic results. If you prefer to utilize a laboratory technician's expertise, an acquisition only system is ideal because you have the benefit of CAD/CAM without having to design, mill, fire, and glaze and stain the restoration. However, if you prefer to perform all functions in your office, chairside CAD/CAM is a terrific option.

Q: How will I afford this technology?

A: One major benefit to utilizing CAD/CAM is that it forces the user to review their clinical process and efficiency. CAD/CAM restorations are not suitable for every clinical situation. However, all-ceramic restorations have definitely proven their efficacy over time in terms of durability and long term esthetics. Chairtime and material waste are significantly reduced using digital impressions. In addition, seat time is reduced because of the accuracy of the digital process.

Q: How will I learn this technology?

A: As with any new technology, training and a good implementation plan are critical. Each system has a unique learning curve, from the impression taking process, to the uploading of the scan, and the design of the restoration. Stepping into the digital age requires minimal computer skill and the systems are very user friendly.

Still confused? THE DENTAL ADVISOR is a leader in CAD/CAM education. We are happy to answer questions for you as well as provide timely clinical tips and case studies. Check out our CAD/CAM Corner for all of the latest industry information at