Handpieces and Maintenance

**Handpiece Processing and Sterilization:**
- Have at least three handpieces for every operatory
- Do not place handpieces in an ultrasonic cleaner or pre-soak solutions
- Remove bur from handpiece before sterilization to lengthen life span
- Scrub handpiece prior to sterilization
- Cool handpiece before use
- Properly clean the autoclave

**If you are manually lubricating handpieces:**
- Apply oil to the correct opening
- Run the handpiece after lubrication
- Spray cleaner into the bur hole once per week to avoid debris

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**Maintenance Tips**

**Electric**

- Advantages
  - High constant torque
  - Low volume
  - Versatility
  - Control
  - Smoother walls/precision

- Disadvantages
  - Initial cost high
  - Repair cost high
  - Learning curve
  - Intimidating
  - Heavy weight

**Air-driven**

- Advantages
  - Better visualization
  - Tactile sensation
  - Lighter
  - Smaller
  - Low cost

- Disadvantages
  - Stalling
  - More frequent repairs
  - Slower cutting
  - High pitch/noise
  - Vibration/bur chatter

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**Challenges in Handpiece Design**

- Electric motor is too heavy
- Transitioning from air to electric is a learning curve
- Electric repairs are more expensive
- Air driven handpieces stall under heavy load
- Air driven handpiece has low torque
- Air driven handpiece is too loud
- More frequent repairs necessary with air driven handpiece

For more information please visit [www.dentaladvisor.com](http://www.dentaladvisor.com) or the March 2015 issue.