Clinical Insight: Help Prevent Post-Operative Sensitivity

A number of factors contribute to the occurrence of post-operative sensitivity, attributable to both technique and product selection. Post-operative sensitivity generally occurs due to inadequately sealed dentinal tubules and/or open margins of the restoration. Post-operative sensitivity is also found more often in Class I as opposed to Class II restorations because of the cavity configuration, which can induce additional stress at the bonding interfaces. Here are some steps that can help prevent long term (> 30 days) post-operative sensitivity:

- Maintain isolation throughout the restorative steps.
- Place an adequate liner for pulp protection on deep cavities.
- Selectively etch the enamel margins with self-etching systems.
- Use a dentin desensitizer that is compatible with or part of your bonding system.
- Remove excess water, but keep cavity visibly moist after acid etching for dentin hybridization.
- Light-cure the adhesive system as per the manufacturer’s instructions.
- Place the resin composite using an incremental technique.


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