

An overview of using gloves in orthodontic practice

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Abstract

Electric pulp testing (EPT) has been available for more than a century and used in dental practices worldwide. This article provides an overview of this diagnostic aid. The PubMed database from 1953 was used initially; the reference list for pulp testing featured 1071 articles, and for EPT identified 121 papers. A forward search was undertaken on these articles and using selected author names. Potentially relevant material was also sought in contemporary endodontic texts, while older textbooks on endodontics, operative dentistry and pain revealed historic information and primary research not found electronically. A short account of the innervation of the pulp is followed by an historic overview. Clinical considerations discussed include tooth isolation, glove wearing and tester electrode placement. Orthodontic treatment, pacemaker wearing and patient medications are considered. Research applications are also discussed. While EPT is valuable, no single pulp testing technique can reliably diagnose all pulp conditions. Careful collection of patient history regarding the problem tooth and prudent use of appropriate radiographs are also helpful. The shortcomings of electric tests, especially in the case of immature and concussed teeth, must be understood. The demeanour of the patient and the responses given by control teeth also require careful consideration.