

## ADHA and Align Technology, Inc. Bring New Continuing Education to the Dental Hygiene Community

The American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA) and Align Technology, Inc., as part of their dedication to ongoing clinical and technological education, are proud to announce a new partnership designed to enhance the educational growth of the dental hygiene community. Align Technology is responsible for the creation of the Invisalign technique, an orthodontic method used to treat malocclusion and to improve overall oral health. Together, ADHA and Align will provide dental hygienists with important information designed to enhance their ability to educate patients about available treatment options, to evaluate patients already in Invisalign treatment more effectively, and to facilitate technological advancement in their practices.

This partnership will offer the dental hygiene community valuable information through a variety of forums. Through a series of articles designed specifically for today's dental hygiene practitioner, ADHA and Align will provide the information necessary to maximize the dental hygienist's expertise and understanding of the Invisalign technique. In June, Lou Shuman, DDS, CAGS, vice president of strategic

clinical relations for Align, will present a lecture on Invisalign and its applicability to the dental hygiene community at ADHA's annual session.

ADHA and Align will also generate a comprehensive clinical brief on the Invisalign technique, which will focus on the educational needs of dental hygienists and will be sent to the ADHA membership in 2005. "Hygienists will be able to utilize this brochure as the ultimate Invisalign reference guide," explains Shuman. "It will serve as a valuable resource to both hygienists and their patients."

Additionally, Align will join ADHA at its Center for Lifelong Learning (CLL) later this year. Now in its third year, CLL is a regional symposium that, through high-level, quality, cost-effective continuing education, allows ADHA to share with the dental hygiene community the technology that is particularly relevant to the educational role dental hygienists play for their patients.

"ADHA's dedication to advancing the art and science of dental hygiene by promoting the highest standards of dental hygiene education and practice is part of our mission," says Helena Gallant Tripp, RDH, ADHA president. "We feel this partnership with Align Technology will expand upon our existing education offerings, emphasizing ADHA's support for professional growth through technological innovation."

Invisalign combines the application of 3-D computer technology and mass-customization with aesthetic, removable appliances to provide a compelling alternative for patients seeking orthodontic treatment. From its inception, Align Technology has been committed to furthering technological and clinical development through ongoing clinical studies and research in universities like University of Pacific, University of Florida, and New York University, as well as collaboration with The Pankey Institute.

In the United States alone, more than 200 million individuals have some form of malocclusion. Each year, less than 1% of these individuals, or approximately two million Americans, enter orthodontic treatment. Thanks to recent advances in technology, the variety and number of treatment solutions is increasing, and the idea of high-tech, low-profile treatment alternatives entices adults to explore their options.



***With the right information, dental hygienists can better educate patients about Invisalign and care for patients already in treatment more effectively.***

Oral health care consumers frequently rely on dental hygienists to explain these treatment options and how the technology works. Understanding the scientific methodology behind new technologies is a responsibility of dental hygienists today, and one that ADHA takes very seriously.

“While we’re providing care, we have the opportunity to plant seeds about options and treatment that will ultimately help our patients optimize their oral health,” says Cathy Berard, RDH, President of the Virginia Dental Hygienists’ Association. “More adults are interested in ortho than we realize, and when you mention the option of Invisalign, they’re even more interested in hearing about this alternative method.”

The Invisalign system has two primary components: ClinCheck® and aligners. ClinCheck is the Internet-based application that allows oral health care professionals to simulate treatment in 3-D by modeling stages of tooth movement. Aligners are thin, nearly invisible, removable dental appliances that correspond to each stage of the ClinCheck simulation. Each custom-made aligner is worn over the teeth for two weeks before being replaced by the next aligner in the series, until treatment is complete.

Currently, there are more than one-quarter of a million people in treatment with the Invisalign method. “It is imperative that hygienists remain current with information about malocclusion, its relevance in periodontal disease and the subsequent risks to total health,” says Tripp. “They must be equipped not only to educate patients about potential treatment options, but also to care for and advise patients currently in treatment with Invisalign.”

As just the beginning in a sequence of exciting opportunities for dental hygienists to gain more knowledge about the Invisalign technique, the continuing series of educational articles in *Access* will focus on topics such as ideal candidates for treatment, the treatment process and technology, the

advantages and results of Invisalign therapy, and studies on the periodontal benefits of the technique.

Invisalign patients are very active participants in the treatment process; in light of this, the article series will also focus on what dental hygienists need to know to take a proactive approach to advising treatment, to answer initial patient questions, to engage patients in the treatment process and ensure compliance from day one, and to provide monitoring and support throughout treatment.

“There are many misconceptions about the Invisalign technique. Those misconceptions range from who qualifies for treatment to the complexity of problems the treatment is able to address,” says Shuman. “The mere existence of these

misconceptions confirms the importance of providing hygienists, key gatekeepers in the dental profession, with the information necessary to respond to and advise patients confidently and effectively.”

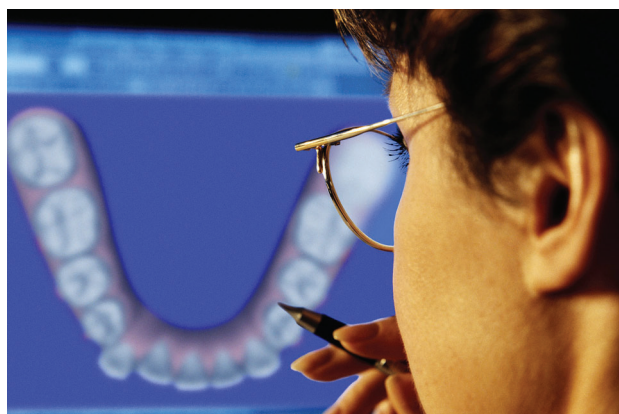
ADHA’s 82nd annual session will be held June 22–29, 2005 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Shuman’s lecture, “Integrating the Invisalign Technique into the Dental Hygiene Practice,” will introduce the science behind the

technology of Invisalign, its benefits, the research and applicability of the technique, and the periodontal implications during treatment.

For more information on the annual session or Shuman’s lecture, visit the ADHA Web site at [www.adha.org](http://www.adha.org). For more information on the Invisalign technique, visit [www.invisalign.com](http://www.invisalign.com).



**The Invisalign manufacturing process combines 3-D technology and mass-customization to produce the aligners.**



**ClinCheck allows oral health care professionals to simulate treatment in 3-D.**