



**Etch-and-rinse or**

**Self-etch adhesive  
systems?**



# Etch-and-rinse or self-etch adhesive systems, which is the best option?

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**THAT SELF-ETCH ADHESIVE SYSTEMS ARE ALREADY A REALITY** in Restorative Dentistry worldwide, no one doubts. The number of scientific articles available, laboratory, clinical or even systematic reviews, demonstrating the quality and reliability of these systems is very large, and in general, possibly, in great part of Post-graduation Programs in Brazil, these self-etch adhesive systems are the first option when considering

restorative procedures. Now, if that happens, why are these adhesive systems not among the best sellers in our country? Why do these adhesive systems still generate so much mistrust among general practitioners? Why do Brazilian dentists still have conventional etch-and-rinse adhesive systems as their first option when they perform, for example, a direct restoration with composite resin?

There is no doubt that the answer to the first question can certainly be related to financial reasons. But the answers to the other questions all come from the same source, that is, classes about adhesion and adhesives to undergraduate students in the Schools of Dentistry in our country. In general, students leave the University with little or no theoretical information about these self-etch adhesive systems, and in the vast majority, they leave without any clinical experience with them. In fact, in undergraduate clinics, especially in public universities, it is much more common to use conventional adhesive systems, that still use acid etching both in enamel and dentin, mainly for economic reasons linked to bureaucratic bidding processes. But even in private schools, this reality is not so different. Now, if the dentists graduate without knowledge about that material (self-etch adhesives), among the 350,000 active dentists in Brazil, unfortunately, a large part follows their career using what they used in their schools, and that is one of the main reasons why Brazil is a world champion in the sale of phosphoric acid.

One of the pillars of the GBPD (Brazilian Group of Restorative Dentistry Professors) is to guide, assist in making decisions regarding the teaching

of this specialty in undergraduate and graduate courses. Always based on up-to-date scientific evidence, the Group has sought to guide the teams of professors at Universities by creating protocols, guides, norms, related to the most different topics involved in the teaching of Restorative Dentistry. Discussions about protocols for protection of the Dentin-Pulp complex, or about maintaining amalgam teaching, among others, were decisive and guide many therapeutic or academic decision-makings to date.

Thus, aware of an eventual need to update the model used in most Universities, the GBPD had, during its last Meeting held in the city of Rio de Janeiro, in June 2019, a Symposium whose title was "Teaching of adhesion in Brazil". The main objective of this Symposium was to answer whether we should already make our undergraduate students use self-etch adhesive systems in clinical practices during graduation. After much discussion, the GBPD came to the following conclusions:

- There is already enough scientific evidence to prove the reliability and safety in the use of self-etch adhesive systems in daily clinical practice;

- The Professors in the disciplines of Restorative Dentistry should include in their programs the theoretical teaching on self-etch adhesive systems. Likewise, in practical pre-clinical laboratory classes, undergraduate students should use these adhesives;
- Theoretical and practical pre-clinical laboratory teaching related to conventional etch-and-rinse adhesive systems should continue to be part of the programs of disciplines of Restorative Dentistry during graduation;
- In clinical practical activities, undergraduate students should start using both types of adhesive systems, conventional etch-and-rinse and self-etch;
- In Universities where these self-etch adhesive systems are not present in the list of materials available for clinical use, professors must look for ways to make them part of this list of materials, either through negotiations with administrators, with manufacturers or even with the group of students, so that the latter do not leave the Universities without the proper clinical experience with these materials;

These suggestions can be difficult to implement in many schools in Brazil, but GBPD hopes that this column can at least serve as a subsidy and argument for attempts of changing with administrators and / or students across Brazil.

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