

Improving Risk Management by Documenting Dental Professionalism

A White Paper from the IdentAlloy/IdentCeram Council

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Introduction

A continuing stream of technological advances in restorative materials has brought many benefits to patients over the years. It has also raised the importance of verifying and documenting the content of those materials, particularly in light of increased concerns over biocompatibility and the rising costs of malpractice premiums. A simple, widely recognized system of material certification is a major contributor not only to successful patient outcomes but also comprehensive, effective risk and practice management.

Wider choices, broader concerns

The range of options in restorative materials today gives dentists an unprecedented ability to match the material to the particular needs of each case. It has also added to the responsibilities that dentists, labs, patients and even insurers have to verify and document that the material being used matches what was ordered.

One compounding factor has been the greater attention now being focused on preventing conditions that can be caused or aggravate by certain restorative materials. Some researchers expect the biocompatibility issue to continue on its growth path. They say that not only has reporting improved but also the population may be becoming more sensitive to certain substances.

For example, theories have been put forth that with body piercing becoming more popular, more and more patients have reached or exceeded their bodies' tolerance for some types of metal. A dental prosthesis could contain enough of a particular type of metal to put their body over the limit and cause a toxic response.

Know—and document—thy materials

To help dentists and labs avoid this type of result, it has become more important than ever that the content of materials be verified throughout a documented “chain of custody”—all the way from the manufacturer to the patient’s mouth, including the path through the lab, dentist and possibly an intermediate supplier or distributor.

The value of employing such a system would extend beyond improving outcomes. It would serve as a key component of a comprehensive risk management strategy aimed at minimizing the costs of insurance and litigation by improving practice performance on several counts:

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► **Accurate, efficient record-keeping**

Responsible and effective dental treatments must be based on practitioners understanding all relevant elements of a patient's history of care. By serving as permanent parts of the patient record, the verification system's supporting documents would provide an accurate source of information about the types of materials used in prior treatments. (As a side benefit, they would also relieve staff of the need to manually enter that information for new restorations, and they simplify records research as well.)

► **Supporting informed consent**

A materials certification system can aid a dentist in discharging his or her obligation to explain to patients enough about a procedure to meet informed consent requirements. In doing so, the system would help guide professionals in each of the of the three critical areas of informed consent.

First, when a dentist is explaining why a treatment is needed, he or she can use information contained in the documentation to support their reasons for choosing the particular material. Second, dentists reviewing treatment alternatives with a patient can again use the document's information to clarify the content of the selected material. Third, dentists can use the materials composition information to thoroughly explain any risks involved with each component, and ease concerns of patients worried about biocompatibility or other issues.

► **Demonstrating the standard of care**

No dentist can guarantee that a patient will not suffer an adverse reaction or other problem with a restorative material. But to meet the standard of care dentists are expected to make a significant effort to learn about the risk of such complications. And they are also required to avoid using materials likely to cause such issues. By consistently using a materials documentation system, dentists could show in court that they adhered to the standards of care in their selection of materials. They would simply need to make sure that their labs supply materials certification with each case, and then complete the process by putting the supporting documents in the patient file in its paper form or by scanning it.

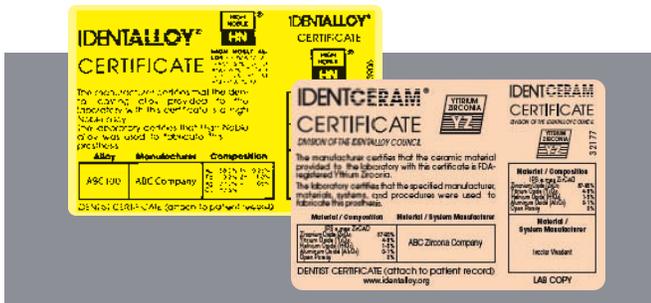
■
It has become more important than ever that the content of materials be verified throughout a documented "chain of custody."

Streamlining insurance claims

Documenting materials composition has benefits beyond its role in risk management. Insurers often want to see bills backed up by details about restoration content. Photocopies of certification documents can provide this documentation. Earlier in the process, copies of the certificates can expedite any prior approvals that may be necessary.

A solution at hand

Twenty-five years ago, the dental profession gained an easy, inexpensive way to verify and document the composition of materials used in restorations. Overseen by the non-profit IdentAlloy/IdentCeram Council, the IdentAlloy/IdentCeram certificate system gave dental labs and dentists a tool that has become an important adjunct to risk and practice management. It has since played a growing role in helping improve outcomes, raise efficiencies and reduce risk in practices throughout the U.S. and Canada.



The IdentAlloy/IdentCeram Council's certificate program provides independent verification of the content of alloyed and ceramic materials used for crowns, bridges, partial dentures and other restorative products.

IdentAlloy and IdentCeram certificates document these restorative materials:

IdentAlloy Certificates

- Cobalt base (PB - Green)
- High noble* (HN) (noble metal content $\geq 60\%$, gold content $\geq 40\%$)
- Noble* (N) (noble metal content $\geq 25\%$)
- Predominantly base (PB - Rose) (noble metal content $< 25\%$)
- Titanium (TI)

* Noble metals are gold, palladium and platinum, rhodium, indium, osmium and ruthenium.

IdentCeram Certificates

- Aluminum oxide (AO)
- Fluorapatite glass-ceramic (FA)
- Leucite glass (LG)
- Leucite glass-ceramic (LE)
- Lithium disilicate glass-ceramic (LD)
- Yttrium zirconia (YZ)

Suppliers in the program provide labs with free, two-part certificates with each shipment of an IdentAlloy—or IdentCeram-registered material. With every order for a restoration using that material, the lab retains one part of the sticker for its records. The other part is shipped to the dentist with the restoration to verify composition.

The IdentAlloy/IdentCeram program began by certifying just three types of materials: high noble, noble and predominantly base, reflecting the relatively narrow range of choices available at the time. However, numerous technological advances since then have given dentists unprecedented variety in the materials from which they can choose. Reflecting this, what started as a small program among a few forward-thinking suppliers has become an industry standard, with 38 companies now participating. Last year, the IdentAlloy/IdentCeram Council shipped more than 17 million certificates to manufacturers and other suppliers for redistribution to their client labs and dentists.

Conclusion

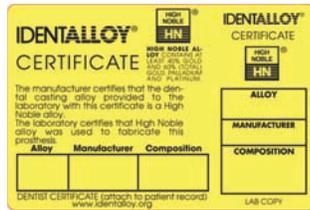
Today's far wider range of options in restorative materials has combined with the increasing amount of restorative work being done to create an even greater need for dentists to know and to be able to show that the materials used match the materials ordered. This critical task becomes easy with the use of IdentAlloy and IdentCeram certificates.

The future is certain to bring more advances in restorative materials and treatments that result. As the IdentAlloy/IdentCeram program keeps pace with these innovations, more and more labs, dentists and patients can be expected to benefit from those breakthroughs as they take standards of care to new heights.

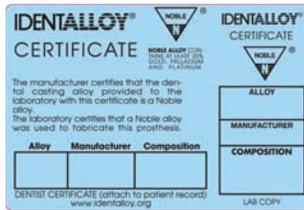
For more information: *To find out more about the IdentAlloy/IdentCeram program, go to IdentAlloy.org or contact Charles E. Yenker, Executive Director of the IdentAlloy/IdentCeram Council, at (888) 577-2634.*

Appendix I—IdentAlloy and IdentCeram Certificates

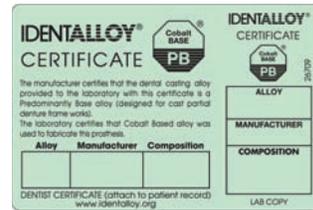
IdentAlloy Certificates



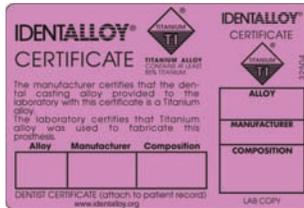
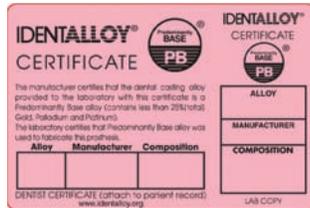
HN = Noble Metal
Content ≥60%,
Gold Content ≥40%



N = Noble Metal
Content ≥25%



PB = Noble Metal
Content <25%



Noble metals are gold, palladium, platinum, rhodium, indium, osmium and ruthenium.

IdentCeram Certificates



Appendix II—Participating Companies

Firms participating in the IdentAlloy/IdentCeram program

Amann Girrbach America Inc.

12169 Villa Road
Spring Hill, FL 34609
Phone: 352 688 0890
www.amanngirrbach.com/en/company/

The Argen Corporation

5855 Oberlin Drive
San Diego, CA 92121
858 455 7900
www.argen.com/

Aurident Inc.

610 State College Blvd
Fullerton, CA 92831
800 422 7373
www.aurident.com/

Baker Dental

P.O. Box 339
Lake Zurich, IL 60047
847 726 3800
www.bakerdental.com/

BEGO CANADA

700 Boul Du Parc Tech
Quebec, QC G1P 2S3 Canada
418 683 6567
www.bego.com/

BEGO USA

24 Albion Road Suite 103
Lincoln, RI 02865
800 342 2346
www.bego.com/html/

Captek™

250 Altamonte Commerce Blvd.
Altamonte Springs, FL 32714
800 921 2227 ext. 130
www.captek.com/

CENDRES + MÉTAUX SA

Rue de Boujean 122
CH-2501 Biel-Bienne
+41 32 344 22 11
www.cmsa.ch/en/Pages/default.aspx

CENDRES + METAUX USA

255 John Dietsch Blvd
North Attleboro, MA 02761
800 554 5504
www.cmsa.ch/en/Pages/default.aspx

Dentrex Inc.

170 Changebridge Rd; Unit D6
Montville, NJ 07045
973 882 9399
www.visionusasupplies.com/

Dentsply Canada

161 Vinyl Court
Woodbridge, ON L4L 4A3
Canada
800 263 1437
www.dentsply.ca/

DENTSPLY Prosthetics

570 W. College Avenue
York, PA 17405
800 487 0100
www.dentsply.com/

DFS-DIAMON GmbH

Ländenstrasse 1
93339 Riedenburg Germany
Fon: +49 (0) 9442 9189 0
Fax: +49 (0) 9442 9189 37
www.dfs-diamon.de/

European Dental Imports

49 Emerson Road
Durham, NH 03824
603 868 3306
www.elephantusa.com/

Indenco Dental Products

49 No. Maple St., Unit B
Corona, CA 92880
877 500 0081
www.indenco.com/

Ivoclar Vivadent, Inc.

175 Pineview Drive
Amherst, NY 14228
716 691 0010
www.ivoclarvivadent.us/

Mountain Medico, Inc.

600 N. Mountain Ave. Suite D204
Upland, CA 91786
909 931 0688
www.mountainmedico.com/

W.E. Mowrey Co.

1435 University Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55104
612 646 1895
www.superpages.com/bp/Saint-Paul-MN/W-E-Mowrey-CO-L0123317412.htm

Nobilium

413 North Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12201
800 833 2343
www.cmpindustries.com/servlet/StoreFront

Nordenta

5282 Tiffany Court
Mississauga, ON L5M 5G9 Canada
800 393 7222
www.nordenta.net/

Pentron Alloys

Exclusively distributed by
Zahn Dental, a Division of
Henry Schein, Inc.
135 Duryea Rd
Melville, NY 11747
800 496 9500
www.henryschein.com/Default.aspx

Sterngold Dental, LLC

23 Frank Mossberg Drive
Attleboro, MA 02703
508 226 5660
www.sterngold.com/

Sun Dental

4908 Creekside Drive St. B
Clearwater, FL 33760
866 561 9777

Swiss NF Metals, Inc.

156 Duncan Mill Road Unit 19
Toronto, ON M3B 2N2 Canada
416 510 2220
www.swissnf.com/

Talladium, Inc

27360 W. Muirfield
Valencia, CA 91355
800 221 6449
store.talladium.com/

Wieland Dental Systems

22 Shelter Rock Lane
Danbury, CT 06810
866 876 0885
www.wieland-dental.de/eng/