



KARRIE VELKY,
RDH

Karrie Velky has been a dental hygienist for 17 years; 11 in general private practice, 3-years in a private periodontal office, and is currently back in general practice. The last 2 years she has also been an adjunct clinical instructor at Kirkwood Community College in the Dental Hygiene program, at the University of Iowa College of Dentistry. She lives in Ely, IA, with her husband and 2 sons.



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ZIRC

Pink Petal

Hands-free suction device holds the saliva ejector in place, serving as an extra hand for the dental professional when no assistant is available

Zirc's Pink Petal slides onto saliva ejectors to provide continuous, comfortable, hands-free suction with no additional attachments. By placing buccal side, the Pink Petal holds the saliva ejector right where it is needed—the back corner of the patient's mouth—without obstructing view. The product is also single-use and is latex free. Here, Karrie Velky, the inventor of Pink Petal, discusses the reasons for the product's development and why she wants to make other clinicians' jobs easier and less stressful.

DPS How did Pink Petal come to be? Why did you invent it?

When I started working in perio, where every patient is scaled ultrasonically, I was constantly running behind schedule because I was fumbling with the suction. I started searching the market for something that would hold the suction in place and protect the patient's cheek from the suction—but that would still allow me to work on the entire mouth without having to move the suction out of my way. I searched product books, I asked reps, I talked to colleagues, but came up with nothing. That's when I decided I was going to make something that would solve all of my problems, and help keep me on schedule.

I had a rough version of Pink Petal that I was using on every patient and they started asking if it was something new, stating how comfortable it made their appointment. Then, other hygienists started asking about it and wanted to try it. That's when I realized I wasn't the only one who struggled with this problem, and I decided I wanted to bring the product to market. My hope with Pink Petal is that it makes other clinicians' days easier and less stressful, and helps make patients' appointments more comfortable.

DPS What challenges can Pink Petal help clinicians overcome?

The main challenge that Pink Petal solves is that it is a suction tip holder that holds the slow suction for the operator when they need a third hand but



don't have an assistant to help. It also protects the patient's cheek from being sucked up into the suction tip, stopping the flow of suction and causing trauma. It's great for elderly patients, they tend not to cough and choke on the water. Patients are still able to close their lips around the saliva ejector. It slides into and out of working position in seconds!

DPS How can Pink Petal improve workflow in the operatory?

The time it saves during the procedure—not to mention the time it saves during set-up, assembly of a suction or isolation device, and disassembly—is unmatched. With Pink Petal, you can suction hands-free without the need of an assistant plus you work more efficiently to stay on schedule. This is a cost effective product that works with your existing saliva ejector. No accessories to purchase. No upkeep. Most importantly, it drastically minimizes procedure time.