



COLLEGE OF  
DENTAL HYGIENISTS  
OF MANITOBA

# POSITION STATEMENT for Atraumatic Restorative Therapy (ART)

May 2024

The College of Dental Hygienists of Manitoba, Professional Practice Committee is responsible for developing professional resource documents for dental hygienists. Council approves these documents, of which, the purpose is to explain, enhance, add, or guide dental hygiene practice in accordance with The Dental Hygienists Act and Regulations. It is the responsibility of the dental hygienist to understand and comply with these documents.

## The College of Dental Hygienists of Manitoba Position Statement for Atraumatic Restorative Therapy (ART)

### Purpose

The purpose of this guiding document is to inform registrants of the College of Dental Hygienists of Manitoba (CDHM) of the position for Atraumatic Restorative Therapy (ART).

### Background

- Atraumatic Restorative Therapy (ART) is a minimally invasive dental treatment approach that was developed in response to a need to provide effective and preventive caries treatment in underserved communities.<sup>1</sup>
- ART typically uses glass ionomer, requires no local anesthesia and requires minimal equipment.<sup>2,3</sup>
- ART can include opening a cavitated lesion to access diseased/decayed tissue, and the removal of diseased/decayed tooth structure; only hand-instruments (hatched, excavator) are used for ART.<sup>2,3</sup>
- There are modified versions of ART, such as “Modified Atraumatic Restorative Therapy (ARTm)” (ARTm may involve a rotary instrument to open the cavity, and/or remove demineralized dentin), and ‘Silver Modified Atraumatic Restorative Therapy (SMART)’, that may involve the removal of tooth structure.<sup>3,4</sup>
- RDHs are required to identify caries risk, assess for sound dentition, assess for function and pain, and can provide temporary restorative therapy; RDHs do not diagnose caries.
- RDHs approved on the Advanced Practice Restorative Roster can place permanent restorations, under direction of, and in collaboration with a dentist.

**NOTE: Interim Therapeutic Restoration (ITR)** utilizes similar techniques as ART but has different therapeutic goals and more accurately describes the procedure used in a contemporary dental practice with young patients, uncooperative patients, or patients with special needs or when traditional cavity preparation or placement is not feasible; ITR may involve the removal of tooth structure.<sup>5,6</sup>

- Neither ART nor ITR are defined as definitive restorations and are meant to be monitored and followed-up, however this is not always feasible.<sup>1,6</sup>

### Position

- ART involves removal of decayed/diseased tooth structure; therefore, this therapy, and other similar therapies that may include removal of tooth structure, cannot be performed by dental hygienists in Manitoba.<sup>7</sup>

**NOTE: Interim Stabilization Therapy (IST) is a caries-control therapy that does not involve the removal of tooth structure and can be performed by Manitoba dental hygienists. See the [Interpretation Guideline for IST](#) for more information.**

\*This position statement reflects current knowledge and legislation and is subject to periodic review and revisions with on-going research.

## References

1. World Health Organization. (1998). Atraumatic Restorative Treatment (ART) for Tooth Decay. A Global Initiative. WHO/NCD/ORH/ART, 1-8.
2. Frencken JE, Leal SC. The correct use of the ART approach. *J Appl Oral Sci.* 2010 Jan-Feb;18(1):1-4. doi: 10.1590/s1678-77572010000100002. PMID: 20379674; PMCID: PMC5349038
3. Holmgren CJ, Roux D, Doméjean S. Minimal intervention dentistry: part 5. Atraumatic restorative treatment (ART)--a minimum intervention and minimally invasive approach for the management of dental caries. *Br Dent J.* 2013 Jan;214(1):11-8. doi: 10.1038/sj.bdj.2012.1175. PMID: 23306489.
4. Department of Pediatric Dentistry, School of Dentistry, University of Sao Paulo, Brasil. (2012, May 23). Modified ART: Why Not? Scientific Electronic Library Online, p. 1.
5. American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry. (2017). Policy on Interim Therapeutic Restorations (ITR). In *C. o. Affairs, Oral Health Policies Reference Manual* (pp. 58-59). AAPD.
6. Saber AM, El-Housseiny AA, Alamoudi NM. Atraumatic Restorative Treatment and Interim Therapeutic Restoration: A Review of the Literature. *Dent J (Basel).* 2019 Mar 7;7(1):28. doi: 10.3390/dj7010028. PMID: 30866534; PMCID: PMC6473645.
7. College of Dental Hygienists of Manitoba, 2007. Dental Hygiene Competencies. [online]. Available at: <https://cdhm.info/practice-resources/>
8. Smales RJ, Yip HK. The atraumatic restorative treatment (ART) approach for primary teeth: review of literature. *Pediatr Dent.* 2000 Jul-Aug;22(4):294-8. PMID: 10969434.