In 1940 Dr. Clayton Gracey, a dentist and educator, transformed standard “scalers” into a series of area-specific instruments that could be used to access periodontal pockets with minimal trauma. Collaborating with Hugo Friedman, the founder of Hu-Friedy Manufacturing, Dr. Gracey’s designs enabled clinicians to detect, assess and treat previously inaccessible areas of disease. The revolution continues with an ever-expanding array of smaller working ends, improved angulation and more ergonomic designs benefiting both clinicians and patients. This PowerPage reviews numerous popular periodontal instruments and describes their main design features.

**Gracey Curettes – Subgingival Scaling and Root Planing**

Unique design features differentiate Gracey from universal curettes

- Blades (2) are “offset” from shank
  - Universal shank is 90 degrees to shank
- Only lower cutting edge on each blade can be used
  - Offset blade protects tissue from upper cutting edge
- Blade is curved in two planes
- Area specific design
  - Gracey 1-2 and 3-4  Anterior teeth
  - Gracey 5-6  Anterior and premolar teeth
  - Gracey 7-8 and 9-10  Posterior teeth – buccal and lingual surfaces
  - Gracey 11-12  Posterior teeth – mesial surfaces
  - Gracey 13-14  Posterior teeth – distal surfaces

**Modifications to Gracey Designs**

- Gracey 15/16 and 17/18 are modifications of 11/12 and 13/14 respectively
  - Both provide improved access to convex crown and root surfaces
  - Ergonomic design decreases operator wrist flexion
  - Easier insertion and intraoral fulcrum placement
  - Available in After-Five and Mini-Five designs in standard or rigid shank
  - Disadvantage – increases number of instruments needed to treat arch

**Gracey 15/16 – Designed to access mesial surfaces of posterior teeth**

- Same offset blade as 11/12
- Shank accentuated similar to 13/14 for improved “reach” (access)
**Modifications to Gracey Designs - Continued**

**Gracey 17/18 – Accentuated shank improves distal access to posterior teeth**
- Terminal shank is 3 mm longer than standard Gracey
- Blade is 1 mm shorter than standard Gracey
- Handle modification reduces interference with opposing arch

**Langer Curettes – Modified Set of 3 Curettes**

**Gracey 5/6, 11/12 and 13/14**
- Gracey shank design enables improved access to difficult areas
- Universal blade angulation (90 degrees to shank) enables use of both cutting edges
- Allows adaptation to both mesial and distal without changing end/instrument

**After Five Curettes – Modified Version of Standard Gracey**
- Terminal shank is 3 mm longer, larger in diameter and more tapered
- Thinner blade enables more smooth subgingival insertion and less tissue distention

**Mini Five Curettes – Modification of After Five Curettes**
- Improved insertion and adaptation in deep narrow pockets, furcations, grooves, line angles
- Shorter blade – half the length of After Fives
- Available in both finishing and rigid design
  - Finishing design recommended only for very light instrumentation

**Gracey Curvettes – Increased Upward Curvature**

**Enables closer blade adaptation**
- Caution – increased potential for root gouging
- Shorter blade than traditional Gracey (as with Mini Fives)
Morse Curette – Modification of Morse Scaler (sickle)
- Miniature working end of scaler modified with protective features of curette
- Straight shank design ideal for anterior teeth

Kramer-Nevins Curettes
- Modified Gracey designed for root planing and curettage
- Slightly modified blade length, thinner profile and extra length

Schwartz Periotrievers
- Set of two, double-ended, magnetized instruments
  - One for furcations; one for deep pockets
- Designed for retrieval of broken instrument tips

ODU 11-12 Explorer
Shank design and tip curvature of Gracey 11-12 curette
- Long shank provides ideal access to deep pockets
- Available in even longer After Five length
- Highly sensitive design useful for calculus detection in deep pockets

Kunselman, Barbara, Scaramucci, Mary Kaye; Make the Most of Your Modified Gracey Curets; Dimensions of Dental Hygiene; November 2010; 8(11); 42-44; www.dimensionsofdentalhygiene.com/ddhright.aspx?id=9909#.UQmBISdEGSo

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