



Toothtunes ↑

Tiger Electronics, a division of Hasbro, Inc., delivers TOOTHTUNES, a brand-new toothbrush featuring technology that will encourage people of all ages to brush for two full minutes, the amount of time recommended by dentists. TOOTHTUNES' safe and patented technology transmits songs and music vibrations through the teeth, which are then

heard in the inner ear. The revolutionary toothbrush uses a microchip that provides hit music from the industry's hottest artists, including Black Eyed Peas, Hilary Duff, Destiny's Child, and Kelly Clarkson, among others. Users will hear two full minutes of the hottest music from today's biggest stars and some brushes will feature a congratulatory message upon completion. Available this month nationwide, TOOTHTUNES retails for \$9.99 and includes three AAA batteries. For more information, visit www.toothtunes.com.

Give Priority Treatment Time to Returning Veterans

The 2006 American Dental Association's House of Delegates urged dentists across the country to offer "priority treatment time" to combat veterans returning from active duty.

The House discussed the matter in response to the Department of Veterans Affairs appeals for private practice help in meeting service-related dental needs of combat veterans. Robert T. Frame, DDS, assistant undersecretary for health for dentistry for the VA and a decorated veteran of combat service in Afghanistan and Iraq, addressed the House of Delegates in Las Vegas last October.

"I am incredibly proud of our profession and of you, my peers, who represent

CONTINUES ON 98



MercyShips International

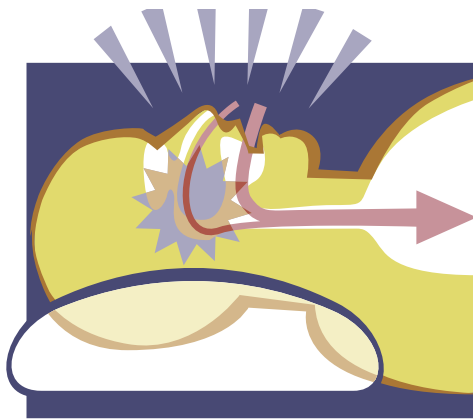
Dentists Can Volunteer With Mercy Ships

Today, of the 22 million people living in Ghana, fewer than 400 are dentists. This startling fact was reported in a recent issue of the *Pennsylvania Dental Journal*. The article, one of several in an issue dedicated to volunteerism, described the activities of Mercy Ships, a global charity organization committed to bringing medical and community services to developing nations.

Among the services, which total \$600 million, performed in underdeveloped countries, Mercy Ships has provided 162,000 free dental procedures.

Dental professionals interested in more information should contact Mercy Ships human resources at jobs@MercyShips.org or go to www.mercyships.org.

Mercy Ships crews are made up of volunteer professionals from around the globe such as physicians, dentists, nurses, community developers, teachers, cooks, seamen, engineers, and others. More than 2,000 short-term volunteers annually join 1,000 career staff and crew from more than 40 nations.



Recognizing Sleep Apnea in Your Patients

Reported loud snoring accompanied by pauses in breathing throughout the night are a few signs dentists can best recognize obstructive sleep apnea syndrome in their patients.

Archie Morrison, DDS, MS, director of graduate training in oral and maxillofacial surgery at Dalhousi University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, in an issue of the *Journal of the Canadian Dental Association* also wrote of other symptoms including morning headaches, daytime somnolence, and impaired thinking. These symptoms are typically reported by the patient's sleeping partner either to the patient or directly to the doctor. Although the typical sleep apnea sufferer is a middle-aged, overweight male, not all patients have this stereotypical profile, according to Morrison.

Sleep apnea occurs when a person's airway becomes fully or partially obstructed, and the level of blood oxygen drops, blood pressure and heart rate fluctuate, and sleep is disturbed. The long-term effects of sleep apnea can be pulmonary hypertension, cardiovascular difficulties, and heart failure.

Morrison said a questionnaire like the Epworth Sleepiness Scale or overnight pulse oximetry can help screen patients for obstructive sleep apnea syndrome. Only a full polysomnogram is diagnostic. However, lateral cephalometric radiography allows the assessment of the posterior pharyngeal airway space and can be a useful diagnostic tool.

A dentist who suspects a patient may have obstructive sleep apnea syndrome should refer him or her to a sleep specialist for assessment.

GlasSpan Single-use Trauma Kit →

GlasSpan Inc. announces the addition of a Single-use Trauma Kit. The new kit includes everything necessary to quickly and easily stabilize injured teeth without the use of metallic wire. The average time to place the splint is 10 minutes. Enough material is supplied to stabilize



two arches. Oral surgeons, endodontists, periodontists, as well as hospital, government, and community dental clinics will find the kit particularly useful, eliminating the need to purchase the components from multiple sources. The GlasSpan Single-use Trauma Kit retails for \$69. For additional information or to place an order, contact GlasSpan Inc., www.glasspan.com, or call (800) 280-SPAN.

Dig This: Ancient Tombs of Egyptian Dentists Found

A group of grave robbers digging around Egypt's oldest pyramid has led authorities to discover the ancient tombs of three dentists.

According to a report by *Voice of America News*, after examining the area where thieves had been digging just outside of Cairo, archeologists decided to continue the unearthing. Ten meters under the sand was a burial complex for three dentists who worked in the service of the pharaoh during Egypt's Old Kingdom. Experts were able to identify the profession of the deceased by the signatory tooth under each hieroglyphic title on the walls of the tomb. The discovery dates the practice of dentistry back nearly 5,000 years.

Until now, Egyptologists only knew of one other reference to a dentist in ancient Egypt. His name was found engraved on a tomb wall, also signed with a tooth. Egypt's

director of antiquities, Zahi Hawass, said the latest discovery is important because not only does it offer greater proof that dentistry was practiced in pharaonic times but also shows the respect the king had for those who provided his dental care.

Hawass said the dentists' burial next to the king's pyramid indicated they were being honored for their service.



UPCOMING MEETINGS

2007

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| April 15-21 | United States Dental Tennis Association, Sarasota, FL, www.dentaltennis.org |
| April 17-21 | American Academy of Oral Medicine Annual Meeting, San Diego, www.aaom.com |
| May 3-6 | CDA Spring Scientific Session, Anaheim, (866) CDA-MEMBER (232-6362) |
| June 27-July 1 | Academy of General Dentistry Annual Session, San Diego Convention Center, (888) 243-3368 |
| Sept. 27-30 | American Dental Association 148th Annual Session, San Francisco, www.ada.org |
| Nov. 27-Dec. 1 | American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology 58th Annual Session, Chicago, www.aaomr.org |

2008

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| May 1-4 | CDA Spring Scientific Session, Anaheim, (866) CDA-MEMBER (232-6362) |
| Sept. 12-14 | CDA Fall Scientific Session, San Francisco, (866) CDA-MEMBER (232-6362) |
| Oct. 16-19 | American Dental Association 149th Annual Session, San Antonio, Texas, www.ada.org |

To have an event included on this list of nonprofit association meetings, please send the information to Upcoming Meetings, CDA Journal, 1201 K St., 16th Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814 or fax the information to 916-554-5962.

Dementia Sufferers Can't Always Communicate Needs

Too often, senior citizens suffering from dementia often endure oral pain because their mental state prevents them from communicating their needs, said Michael Sigal, DDS, in the September 2006 issue of *Oral Health*.

"Behavior problems frequently observed in the demented, such as lack of interest in eating, lip chewing or smacking, tongue chewing, self-abuse, i.e., head slapping, aggressive behavior, altered sleeping patterns, crying, and screaming, could be a result of oral pain and the patient's frustration over the inability to communicate that problem to caregivers," Sigal wrote.

He recommended that patients with dementia who are admitted to long-term care facilities have comprehensive oral assessments performed, preferably completed by dental professionals.

Since oral function begins to decline

with the onset of dementia, Sigal said it is important to determine the oral health needs of new long-term care residents immediately, and to provide the required treatment.

He also acknowledged that the greatest barrier to providing adequate daily preventive oral care and required dental treatment to patients with dementia is lack of cooperation and difficulties with communication. Sigal also said it is important that training long-term care staff to help administer daily oral care to patients is key, adding that most oral health care needs of long-term care dementia patients are administered by family members or the least educated facility staff.

"Our goal should be to sustain good oral health for demented adults, who, for the most part, tried to maintain good oral health throughout their lives, in order to ensure that they are free from oral pain and infection during the final phase of their lives."

ADA Personalized Products

The American Dental Association has announced the launching of Personalized Products, a new line of practice-building items. More than 200 products will feature all new, exclusive ADA designs to assist in practice development and recognition. The ADA symbol, shown next to a practice's name, adds to the practice's authority and visibility in its

community. Personalized paper products include recall and reminder cards, business and appointment cards, patient education brochures, coloring books, and letterhead. Best of all, the ADA will ship all items within 24 to 48 hours and personalize them free of charge. Members and past customers will receive a free Personalized Products Catalog from ADA. To order online, go to www.adacatalog.org or call (800) 947-4746.



"Behavior problems frequently observed in the demented, ... could be a result of oral pain and the patient's frustration over the inability to communicate that problem to caregivers."

MICHAEL SIGAL, DDS



Latex Gloves Aren't Always the Cause of Rashes

Compared to the general population, health care workers, including dental professionals, are at least twice as likely to develop allergic contact dermatitis. This is mainly due to their greater chances of handling chemicals and specially treated latex, wrote Curtis Hamann, MD, Pamela Rodgers, PhD, and Kim Sullivan, in the fall 2006 issue of *The Dental Assistant*.

The authors cautioned that when allergic contact dermatitis is not diagnosed properly, skin problems can linger for years with significant effects on the sufferer's career and health. They emphasized that self-diagnosis or even incomplete diagnosis or misinterpretations of symptoms by physicians are obstacles to treating allergic contact dermatitis effectively.

The common perception that skin reactions are always due to natural rubber latex or gloves is incorrect. Dental professionals should be aware of all the chemical allergens they handle and the appropriate way to treat reactions. Allergic chemicals can be found in a number of products used in dental settings, such as disinfectants, preservatives, and bonding agents.

The most important thing dental professionals can do to take care of skin reactions is to guard themselves with an understanding of the chemicals they are exposed to at home and work. Collecting chemical content information from products used in the dental office can help identify possible methods of exposure and potential chemical allergens.

Honors and Awards



Marc Geissberger,
DDS, ME

Marc Geissberger, DDS, ME, of San Francisco, chair of the department of restorative dentistry at University of the Pacific Arthur A. Dugoni School of Dentistry, has been named a fellow of the Leadership Institute of the American Dental Education Association.

Gordon L. Douglass, DDS, was named the 2006 recipient of the American Academy of Periodontology Gold Medal Award, the highest honor bestowed by the AAP. The annual award recognizes a member for his/her outstanding contributions and services to the Academy and understanding of the field of periodontology. Douglass maintains a full-time private periodontal practice in Sacramento and Folsom, Calif.

Brian Black, DDS, assistant professor, restorative dentistry, Loma Linda University



Brian Black, DDS (left) and Tim Harbolt, DMD

School of Dentistry, left, receives the Academician Award from Tim Harbolt, DMD, president of the World Congress of Minimally Invasive Dentistry, during the organization's annual meeting in Seattle, Washington. The honor is in recognition of his contributions to the academic community and the profession advancing the art and science of minimally invasive dentistry.

Scrapers Help Battle Bad Breath

An estimated 40 million Americans suffer from the heartbreak of halitosis and tongue scrapers can be of some use in battling the malady, that's according to a recent study published in *General Dentistry*.

Halitosis is a term used to describe any disagreeable odor of expired air. Bad breath is a generally accepted term for foul smells coming from the mouth. "Oral malodor" is reserved for unpleasant smells originating from the oral cavity.

June Lee, DDS, MAGD, said post-nasal drip, "which coats the back area of the tongue with bacteria-rich mucous," is a common reason for bad breath. "A tongue scraper is often effective in relieving oral malodor caused by sinus drainage."

Literature examining the effects of using tongue scrapers to brush the tongue, as opposed to using a toothbrush to do the job was reviewed. Researchers found that a tongue cleaner or scraper had better results than a toothbrush in reducing "volatile sulfur compounds levels, which are produced when bacteria and amino acids interact to produce bad breath."

Some people avoid offensive foods and drinks, chew gum, use mouth rinses, or eat mints to mask unpleasant odor. While there is no standard treatment, bacteria-causing halitosis can be reduced by scraping or brushing the back and middle of the tongue. Additionally, tongue scraping can lower the volatile sulfur compound concentration, subsequently reducing oral malodor.



"A tongue scraper is often effective in relieving oral malodor caused by sinus drainage."

JUNE LEE,

DDS, MAGD



"I am requesting your assistance, not only on behalf of the Department of Veterans Affairs leadership but on behalf of the brave men and women who so nobly defend our country."

ROBERT T. FRAME, DDS

VETERANS, CONTINUED FROM 93

the values of our great nation," he said. "I bring you two messages, one of appreciation and the other a call to service, a call for partnership. I want to thank the American Dental Association, particularly the leaders of this august body, those who serve on the Council on Government Affairs, and every dental professional represented here who provides outstanding care to our service men and women both during and after their active duty.

"The VA refers many of these great Americans to many of you and we genuinely appreciate the superb care you and your staffs have provided our veterans," Frame said, adding the VA aims to provide care in a timely manner but cited delays in some geographic locations of 60 to 90 days, "sometimes more," for patients seeking dental appointments.

"I am requesting your assistance, not only on behalf of the Department of Veterans Affairs leadership but on behalf of the brave men and women who so nobly defend our country, to give priority to returning service members when scheduling appointments as they transition back into their communities."

Frame, an ADA House delegate, was

ambushed in both theaters of war and was wounded in Iraq. In recognition of his military service, he received a Bronze Star Medal with "V" (representing valor) device for combat heroism, and a Purple Heart.

In an Oct. 9, 2006, letter to Robert Brandjord, DDS, now immediate past president of the ADA, another top VA official said the VA is falling behind on dental care for returning veterans.

"Unfortunately, it may take months for new patients to receive dental appointments," said Gordon Mansfield, deputy secretary of veterans affairs. "I believe that with assistance from the American Dental Association we can provide dental care more expeditiously to veterans through VA's fee basis program.

"I am confident that members of the ADA are willing to assist us in meeting the needs of veterans, especially now with our returning Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom service members," said Mansfield, who also requested that priority scheduling be given to veterans.

The VA has asked that private practice dentists treat eligible veterans when VA dentists are unable to do so in a timely manner.



Even in Emergencies, Include Complete Information in Referrals

When making referrals, it is generally accepted in the practice of dentistry to provide specialists and patients with documentation. The content of information contained in these letters can facilitate the accurate exchange of patient information as well as serve as a foundation for dialogue between the practitioners.

In a recent issue of the *North Carolina Dental Gazette*, Donna Mack, DDS, wrote about what important data should be included in the letter. Among them are:

- Introduction of the patient;
- Diagnostics available;
- Treatment completed;
- Prognosis;
- Treatment plan, including alternative options;
- Clearly defined areas and/or problems for evaluation by the specialist; and
- Request for written consultation and treatment report.

Mack added that even in situations when emergency referrals are necessary in mid-treatment, a written statement that can be carried by the patient or faxed is crucial. If a telephone referral is absolutely necessary, Mack recommended that both sides — the referrer and the specialist — take comprehensive notes of the conversation.