

Matt Mullin



Moral Luck

BY DAVID W. CHAMBERS, PHD

The way things turn out in life is a combination of our skill and effort, plus a little luck. It is beyond our ability to control everything. Our child catches pneumonia just before the long-anticipated outing to Disney World. About 5 percent of root canal therapies fail, despite being performed by well-trained, generally successful practitioners who follow standard protocol.

The same is true in ethics. Patients sue even when they have given fully informed consent. Good Samaritan laws have been written specifically to protect well-intended health professionals. California has a fund to indemnify professionals who refer suspected abuse to Child Protective Services. It is clearly understood that not every act undertaken for morally sound motives will have a positive outcome. It is disappointing

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Heraeus Venus Diamond

Venus Diamond is a new universal nano-hybrid composite. The composite provides unique handling, strength and durability, low shrinkage, holds a long-lasting polish and good color adaptation. Venus Diamond allows for sculptability and blends

well with natural tooth structures. Venus Diamond composite gives extended working time under the operating light, it doesn't stick to instruments, and allows sculpting to be easier and more efficient. For more information go to heraeus-venus.com.

Color Me Sad: Certain Face Paints Causing Skin Problems

Adverse reactions from face paint items have prompted the Food and Drug Administration to notify health care professionals and consumers about products labeled as distributed by the Oriental Trading Co., Omaha, Neb.

Rashes, burning sensation, swelling, and itchiness were reported as occurring on the same day and skin site of the application. Following testing by an FDA lab, significant microbial contamination was indicated in most of the products. Fun Express Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Oriental Trading Co., is voluntarily recalling face paints manufactured by Shanghai Art Stationery Company Limited, Shanghai, China.

Health care providers and consumers are encouraged to report any incidences of face paint reaction to the FDA, in addition to local and state health authorities. Reports can be made online at <https://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/medwatch/medwatch-online.htm>; calling (800) 332-1088; mailing to MedWatch, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, MD 20852-9787; or faxing to (800) 332-0178.





Reaching Out to Patients Using Social Media

One hundred forty characters or less may be a way for dentists to broach the subject of sleep breathing disorders to their patients.

Speaking at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Dental Sleep Medicine, on the subject of educating the public about dentistry's role in the management of snoring and sleep apnea, Laurence Barsh, DMD, advised attendees that the profession has an obligation to screen dental patients for snoring and sleep apnea and work with physicians in management of treatment.

"Social media sites like Facebook and Twitter are ideal ways to start a conversation with the public who may not know that their health can be affected by problems with breathing during sleep," said Barsh in a previous interview. "Our role as doctors is primarily one of education. People who are unaware that they may have a sleep-breathing problem are online, and we have

to go where they are if we are to succeed in any form of awareness campaign."

While Barsh commented that practice Web sites are an ideal way to educate the public about the medical condition, more efforts, such as social media sites, are needed to reach those who may be unaware they have a sleep breathing disorder.

An estimated 20 million men, women, and children in the United States alone suffer from obstructive sleep apnea. (Millions more snore.) Of these 20 million, only about 10 percent have been diagnosed, despite that the average life span of an untreated sleep apneic is years less than those without sleep apnea.

Heart attacks, heart disease, stroke, diabetes, high blood pressure, depression, erectile dysfunction, and obesity, in addition to car deaths and injuries have been related to sleep apnea and snoring. Billions of dollars are estimated in relation to the increased medical costs of sleep apnea that is untreated.



Heraeus Flexitime Bite

Flexitime Bite is the first step in the Venus Smile Esthetic System. Flexitime Bite is a new bite registration material with a whipped cream-like consistency that allows for accuracy and comfort. The material hardens in 30 seconds and has an

extremely high shore D hardness of 40. Flexitime Bite is not only a standard bite registration material; it is also scannable without the use of powder, which makes it more efficient. For more information go to heraeus-kulzer-us.com.

Weigh Radiation Risks vs. Benefits of Tests

Balance must be taken into consideration when it comes to radiation. While it is helpful that physicians can zap blocked arteries or conduct an examination of the heart without opening the chest cavity, radiation exposure can damage DNA, leading to uncontrolled cell division, according to a recent issue of the *Harvard Heart Letter*.

Certain nuclear stress tests and computed tomography scans can serve up to 10 times the annual background dose in contrast to a tiny amount of the natural background radiation for a chest X-ray. Although the cancer risk from a single medical test or procedure is low in general, for every 1,000 people exposed to the amount of radiation delivered by a cardiac CT scan, the radiation can add one extra case of cancer to the 420 cases that would normally occur. It is estimated that radiation from CT scans now accounts for 1.5 percent of all cancers in the United States.

Because the amount of radiation delivered depends on the medical test, how does one protect oneself? Are all tests worth the radiation received? The *Harvard Heart Letter* noted that one shouldn't agree to medical testing that involves radiation, or ask for it, unless it will give you and your doctor important information about your health. And even then, ask if you can get the lowest radiation dose possible.

To read the article in full, go to https://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletters/Harvard_Heart_Letter/2009/April/Radiation-in-medicine-A-double-edged-sword?utm_source=heart&utm_medium=pressrelease&utm_campaign=heartto409.

Simple Ways to Prevent Sinusitis

When is a cold not a cold? When it's sinusitis, that pesky condition when the sinuses and nasal passages become infected, leading to bacteria or viruses becoming trapped in an unhealthy glob of mucus.

Left to its own devices, the germs grow out of control and result in swelling, which in turn can cause facial pain and headaches, a build up of mucus that produces congestion, and a thickening and tinting of the mucus when white blood cells are dispatched to fight the infection.

But relief of this common infection can be had with several relatively easy treatments ranging from daily bathing of nasal passages and good hydration to inhaling steam, according to a report in a recent issue in the *Harvard Women's Health Watch*.

Using a small pot or squeeze device daily, irrigate the nasal passages, which help moisten mucus membranes and clears excess mucus. Staying hydrated keeps mucus loose and thin. Lingering in a hot shower may also help. Another option is to pour boiling water into a pan and hovering over it while covering one's head with a towel. Inhaling the steam helps moisten the nasal passages.



Community Dental Health Coordinator Program Rolled Out

The American Dental Association has launched a pilot program in an effort to deliver dental care to underserved people in rural, urban, and Native American communities in several states. This program creates a new dental health team member: community dental health coordinator.

These coordinators are supported by a dental team working under the supervision of a dentist, drawn from the communities they are intended to serve. As a community member, they can serve as role models by empowering their neighbors to take an active role in their oral health care such as twice-a-day brushing with fluoride toothpaste, eating a balanced diet, and flossing.

What's more, they are able to link patients to existing community-based, public health assistance programs and Medicaid. CDHCs are also trained to provide a range of preventive care services, such as fluoride treatments and placement of

sealants. And most importantly, the CDHC is trained to identify serious dental conditions that require immediate attention and will get patients to a dentist.

"This outreach effort is one of several ways that the ADA is addressing access to oral health issues," said ADA President Dr. John S. Findley.

CDHC training consists of a 12-month period of academic course work, followed by a six-month field internship. Students in several states began the academic portion of their training, which is provided via the Internet. Among the several academic institutions providing training is the University of California, Los Angeles.

The CDHC program will train a total of 18 CDHCs in the 2009-2010 academic year. The same number of CDHCs will be graduated over the two remaining program years, to produce a total 54 CDHCs. During the course of this effort, the ADA and its partners will evaluate the program to determine its success.

Dr. Fresh's Spiderman Light Up Toothbrush



Fight cavity crime with the new Spiderman Light Up toothbrush. Spiderman doesn't hold back any of his superpowers when it comes to fighting germs that can cling to children's teeth. He lights up for 60 seconds — the dentist-recommended time to brush each bridge — so that the little Spideys of the world know how long to fight cavities and keep brushing. The toothbrush features Spiderman crouched on top of a high-rise building, looking out for all young children, ages 3 and up. The Spiderman Light Up toothbrush retails for \$2.99 and is the newest innovation from Dr. Fresh. For more information go to drfresh.com.





SeLECT Defense by Class One Orthodontics

SeLECT Defense is used to coat brackets, ligature ties, and closing chains to reduce plaque and improve oral hygiene in orthodontic treatment.

The product can also mix with adhesives, cements, and sealants to prevent tooth decalcification or demineralization. SeLECT Defense technology is not removed by tooth brushing. For more information go to selectdefense.com.

Honors

The University of Southern California recently announced the appointment of **Avishai Sadan, DMD**, as dean of its School of Dentistry.

Sadan, who will hold the G. Donald and Marian James Montgomery Dean's Chair in Dentistry, served as associate dean of clinical affairs and professor and chairman of the department of comprehensive care at Case Western Reserve University School of Dental Medicine.

"We are delighted to have professor Avishai Sadan join USC," said USC Executive Vice President and Provost C. L. Max Nikias. "He has distinguished himself at Case Western as a successful administrator and inspiring leader, and we look forward to his service at the USC School of Dentistry as the school continues its mission of educating the finest clinicians, advancing research and enhancing public health."

Sadan, who earned his bachelor's and dental degrees from Hebrew University's Hadassah School of Dental Medicine in Jerusalem, merged the former departments of

restorative dentistry and general dentistry at Case Western, restructured all preclinical courses to align with contemporary restorative approaches, reorganized all clinical procedures, and streamlined all preclinical and clinical operations.



Avishai Sadan, DMD

"With the great privilege of joining one of the world's finest schools comes the huge responsibility of maintaining its high level of excellence," Sadan said. "In a highly competitive environment, the school will continue to reinvent itself using its biggest assets: its outstanding students, world-renowned faculty and the most committed and proud core of alumni any school has. We will continue to attract the best candidates, graduate the finest clinicians, generate exciting scientific discoveries and be a resource for the betterment of our community through our strong community outreach."

New Study Shows Promise With Dental Implants

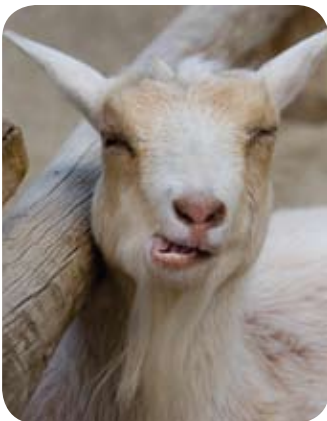
A newly developed procedure using stem cells may provide a more comprehensive regeneration of periodontal tissue around dental implants, according to a new report published in the *Journal of Oral Implantology*.

In this recent study, the authors engineered periodontal tissue in a fresh socket of a goat animal model. According to press release, each of the five goats was fitted with two titanium implants immediately following tooth removal. The control received only the scaffolding while a poly DL-Lactide-co-Glycolide scaffold was fitted around each implant. The experimental implant that received scaffolding was seeded with bone marrow-derived mesenchymal stem cells (BMDSCs). All implant sites showed some level of tissue development at 10 days after the operation. The control side, one month later, showed no signs of tissue development, while the experimental side had

developed cementum, bone, and periodontal ligament, the three tissues required for regeneration of periodontal tissue.

An implant's ability to react to the pressure from chewing, future orthodontic work, and patient growth can be reduced if it is not surrounded by sufficient periodontal tissue. Positive results with BMDSCs in perio defects around natural teeth have been demonstrated in previous studies and other research has seen promising results without BMDSCs, using progenitor cells from the remaining ligament in certain limited situations. However, this recent study demonstrated that using BMDSCs can ensure a more thorough, adaptable regeneration of periodontal tissue with titanium implants.

To read the entire article, "Experimental Formation of Periodontal Structure Around Titanium Implants Utilizing Bone Marrow Mesenchymal Stem Cells: A Pilot Study," to go: allenpress.com/pdf/ORIM-35-3-106.pdf.



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when the prospect of things going wrong while trying to help others places a damper on benevolence. It is sadder still when this happens so often that those who had no intention of lending a hand have a ready excuse.

In academic philosophy, Thomas Nagel's term "moral luck" refers to the darker side of this phenomenon. Often, bad behavior, intended or otherwise, results in no bad consequences. No harm, no foul. The C.E. course at Banff is written off 100 percent on the tax return, unknowingly by the dentist and undetected by the Internal Revenue Service. For years, the office has been out of compliance with the county health code, but no one has gotten sick as a result. Many times when we step over the line, we are lucky and the world goes on, ignorant of our deceit or foolishness. That does not make us ethical, just lucky.

Something like the doctrine of moral luck is recognized in the law. Driving while intoxicated, in an amazing proportion of cases, has no effect on the world and is soon forgotten. Exactly the same behavior does carry consequences if arrested for driving under the influence. Again, exactly the same behavior is a major tragedy if the driver hits a pedestrian, and manslaughter charges are a distinct possibility. The drinking driver surrenders control over his or her life to luck.

There is a branch of ethics that says it is the intention that makes an act moral or immoral. If that were true, the penalty for attempted murder would be the same as the penalty for murder. There is another branch of philosophy that says only the consequences make act moral or immoral. If that were true, letting periodontal disease go untreated would be the same as causing it. The truth of the matter is that intentions, consequences, the standards of society and one's profession, and luck all combine to make morality.

The nub:

- ❶ As a habit, practice far enough above the standard of care that bad luck cannot damage you.
- ❷ Perform an inventory, or get a colleague to help you perform an inventory, of potential negligent practices in your office.
- ❸ Never place more of your reputation on the outcomes of chance than you can afford to lose.

David W. Chambers, PhD, is professor of Dental Education, Arthur A. Dugoni School of Dentistry, San Francisco, and editor of the Journal of the American College of Dentists.



UPCOMING MEETINGS

2009

Sept. 10-13	CDA Presents <i>The Art and Science of Dentistry</i> , San Francisco, 800-CDA-SMILE (232-7645), cda.org .
Sept. 30- Oct. 4	American Dental Association 150th Annual Session, Honolulu, Hawaii, ada.org .
Nov. 2-4	National Network for Oral Health Access National Primary Oral Health Conference, Nashville, Tenn., Luana Harris-Scott (619) 279-5879 or nnoha.org .
Nov. 8-14	United States Dental Tennis Association fall meeting, Scottsdale, Ariz., dentaltennis.org .

2010

April 11-17	United States Dental Tennis Association, Amelia Island Plantation, Fla., dentaltennis.org .
April 26-28	National Oral Health Conference, St. Louis, Mo., nationaloralhealthconference.com .
May 13-16	CDA Presents <i>the Art and Science of Dentistry</i> , Anaheim, 800-CDA-SMILE (232-7645), cda.org .
Sept. 23-26	CDA Presents <i>the Art and Science of Dentistry</i> , San Francisco, 800-CDA-SMILE (232-7645), cda.org .
Nov. 7-13	United States Dental Tennis Association, Grand Wailea, Hawaii, dentaltennis.org .

To have an event included on this list of nonprofit association continuing education 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.



More Support Urged for Indian Health Services Dental Care

Currently lacking in staff and facing a considerable exodus by seasoned dentists ready to retire, Indian Health Services is in even more need of funding, said John S. Findley, DDS, president of the American Dental Association.

Telling the U.S. House Committee on interior appropriations this need comes at a time when “childhood caries and periodontal disease among diabetics are rampant,” Findley reported that an estimated 65 percent of the agency’s dental specialists are eligible for retirement this year.

Findley requested the subcommittee boost the program by \$1 million in order

to train new specialists and ensure there is funding for future budgets. Among Hispanic children in the 2- to 5-year-old age group, the rate of decay is 41 percent; 19 percent for white children; and 29 percent for black children.

However, “approximately 79 percent of Indian children 2 to 5-years-old have dental decay — a level that far exceeds other ethnic groups,” said Findley. “The ADA would like to see this eradicated, and within five years, see that every Native American child is caries free.”

The agency needs dentists who have completed residencies in oral surgery, pediatric dentistry, as well as other dental specialties in order to provide needed advanced oral health care, Findley said.

FDI Supports Warnings on Tobacco Products

The FDI is supporting the World Health Organization’s call to action for “all governments to implement, without delay, the legislative framework necessary to require large pictorial warning on all tobacco packaging”

Additionally, the FDI has repeatedly emphasized the important role of oral health professionals and their associations in tobacco control, patient counseling and advocacy, according to a press release. The joint FDI/WHO publication *Tobacco or Oral Health*, which is available in five languages, outlines how dentists and their teams can effectively engage in tobacco control.

“Helping tobacco users to reduce or quit can be the single most important health advice a dentist can give to a patient,” said Burton Conrod, DDS, FDI president.

Health warnings on tobacco products are crucial elements in the global fight for tobacco control, according to a press release. The FDI World Dental Federation, which spoke on behalf of more than 1 million dentists during the World No Tobacco Day held May 31, strongly supports explicit health warnings and encourages their widespread implementation.

All too often, consumers are not fully aware of the health risks of tobacco use. Knowledge and awareness are the first steps in changing behavior and reducing tobacco use. All tobacco products have a serious impact on oral health. Tobacco use remains the most important risk factor for oral cancer and other oral diseases, and is a leading cause of tooth loss in adults, the press release stated. Using tobacco-related oral diseases in pictorial health warnings on tobacco packaging is a very effective way of communicating about the risks of tobacco use. The oral effects of tobacco use are easily visible and understandable for everyone and may help in motivating consumers to reduce or quit.

To read the press release in full, go to: fdiworldental.org/federation/7_1_WNTD_en.html.

