Checklists not just for pilots anymore

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With popularity of the television show “Mad Men,” 1960s themes are less familiar. The year was significant however, as many diseases were first introduced and the body of knowledge regarding dental hygiene was expanding.

In 1963, pilots developed the concept of the checklist after planes began crashing. Dental professionals may not be crashing in the literal sense, but many clinicians have been forced into early retirement because of musculoskeletal disorders (MSD) or they continue to try to work through them. By incorporating a checklist concept similar to that used by the aviation industry, practitioners may be able to practice without pain.

Pain in dentistry

Pain of dentistry is a common fear among many patients. The individuals having the most difficulty are those with a history of dental anxiety, or they continue to try to work through them. By incorporating a checklist concept similar to that used by the aviation industry, practitioners may be able to practice without pain.

The American Dental Hygienists’ Association (ADHA), conducted a sample survey that is work related. Half of practitioners have some kind of injury related to their work. It was reported that just more than one-third (33.8 percent) indicated they had experienced an occupational injury or illness. Figure 1 shows the types and percentages of occupational injury or illness experienced. More than half (53 percent) used medication to control the discomfort and nearly half (49.5 percent) indicated they had shortened their work hours as a result of their injury or illness. Ergonomics evolved as a recognized field during World War II. It is the science of adjusting the work environment to the worker. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has links to ergonomic information. The American Dental Association (ADA) published the introduction to Ergonomics with suggested interventions and in 2011 published Ergonomics for Dental Students. The ADA website has an ergonomics section with links to issues, but it can certainly offer benefits. The idea of a form-fitting chair for everyone is not nearly common enough. It is professional to sit completely upright and especially not for long periods in the office. A more comfortable sitting position is most for a reclining position. Seating risk factor checklist

Before Knight got into a Le Mans car there were many considerations to be addressed. An impression of the body’s position is taken to ensure a perfect fit into the seat of the car for optimal performance. This molding created: proper leg-stretch to reach the clutch, accelerator and brake; comfort in reaching and holding the steering wheel; and most important, the ability to sit comfortably for long periods of time while driving around the race course. Success for a top-level race car driver is driven by a strict regimen for eating, exercise and nearly all activities of daily life so they can be in top shape physically. It is the total package, including the racing team and pit crew all using checklists, that creates this success. The idea of a form-fitting chair for everyone is not nearly common enough. It is professional to sit completely upright and especially not for long periods in the office. A more comfortable sitting position is most for a reclining position. Seating risk factor checklist

Fig. 3. Steve Knight at Laguna. In racing, perfect driver ergonomics is critical. Knight’s Goldilocks theory applies to a dental practice using existing seating simply because it was already there. Sometimes it’s too low, too too tall or too short, and no matter how much it is adjusted, it is still not just right.