The importance of regular patient mailings

Dentists who want to succeed financially need dental practice marketing. A recent Wealthy Dentist survey on the topic of dental practice marketing asked dentists if they do a regular mailing to their patient base and dentist respondents were split right down the middle! While 51% said it didn’t seem worth the effort, 46% think it pays to keep in touch.

Geographic location also played a particularly interesting role. Two out of three urban dentists in this survey do regular mailings. Half of suburban dentists do. Only one in five rural dentists reports doing so.

Dentists emphasize the importance of dental web site design and internal marketing programs. “Dentists must offer these services and make it known to their patients that they do, otherwise patients will seek it elsewhere,” said one dentist. “We are not recognized by the public and not marketed by organized dentistry! Why?” asked a California dentist.

Many dental practices find internal marketing to be pleasantly profitable. “Internal marketing by far is the best bang for the buck,” said an Illinois dentist. “In my well-established practice, internal marketing has been successful for me,” agreed an Ohio dentist.

Some feel that direct mail marketing is an old-fashioned dental practice marketing strategy. “Postal mailings are a complete waste of time,” declared a California dentist. “Patients ask us not to send them any more junk mail. This is not the 1970s.”

Some wonder if it’s worth the investment. “It seems necessary, but it’s hard to tell if it pays off,” complained a California dentist. “Profitable enough, but very competitive,” commented a South Korea dentist.

Frankly, I can hardly believe that half of dentists are not sending out regular mailings!” sighed Jim Du Molin, dental practice management consultant and founder of The Wealthy Dentist. “Internal marketing programs are among the most profitable, so it amazes me that so many dentists are falling to keep in touch with their regular patients.”

Dental Istanbul’08
International Dental Meetings

Mouthwash could replace the “Toothbrush”

The dreaded dentist’s drill and common toothbrush could become a thing of the past.

Scientists have created a solution that mimics the way the body forms new teeth—allowing natural repairs of holes without the need for drilling and filling.

Oral hygiene experts at Leeds Dental Institute have also made a mouthwash that kills plaque-making bacteria when a light is shone into the mouth. They believed the new liquid could be available in less than three years—and perform the same job as using a toothbrush.

The mouthwash uses a molecule that is absorbed by bacteria in the mouth and destroys the harmful bug when it is activated by a bright light. It is deemed safe as the molecule is already used by the food industry and not harmful if accidentally swallowed.

Called photodynamic therapy, it was developed from a cancer treatment as a way of helping disabled people look after their mouths if they were unable to use a toothbrush.

The institute’s research director, Professor Jennifer Kirkham, said the mouthwash could be used to treat gum disease and would only take a hygienist to perform the treatment.

She added: “We feel confident that this is a major step change for the future.”

Stem cells from wisdom teeth is now a reality

Early minimally invasive removal of wisdom teeth will change the practice of dentistry and advance anti-aging medicine. Parents who did not save their children’s cord blood will get a second to let their children share in potential medical miracles in the future.

The recent study also showed that stem cells were viable after being frozen for three years. Once cells are frozen three years and a hundred years are basically the same. This excellent source of stem cells is easily obtained and does not involve the moral dilemma associated with embryonic stem cells.

Research has shown that healthy stem cells tend to spread through the entire body replacing aging cells. Continued replacement of stem cells periodically throughout life will allow healthy stems to continually replace youthful cells with aging cells.

The stem cells from wisdom teeth are in a quiescent phase for many years before they form a tooth and are therefore less affected by contaminants in the environment such as lead, B is Phe, A and damage from radiation and other sources.

The use of stem cells from umbilical cord blood has been proven to replace bone marrow transplants when a suitable HLA match is unavailable and many parents are saving cord blood for future personal use.

It is very possible that saving of cord blood may be the greatest gift a parent can give a child. The use of stem cells is in its infancy and future uses will probably seem miraculous by today’s standards.

Imagine what research can do over the next 10 or 20 years much less a lifetime of 80 years or more. Collection of stem cells from wisdom teeth is a second chance for parents who did not save umbilical cord blood.

Istanbul invites dental professionals

While remembering Napoleon Bonaparte’s words “If the world was a single country, Istanbul would have been its capital city,” we are taking steps for making Istanbul capital city of dental world by holding Dental Istanbul.

In the magical atmosphere of Istanbul, with the excitement of celebrating centenary year of modern dentistry in Turkey, we are expecting to meet dental professionals from all around the world.

We think that, by the help of central position between East and West, and being a bridge between Asia and Europe, meeting in Istanbul will be easier than many places in the world.

We will be very pleased to see you in Istanbul, as a visitor, exhibitor, attendee or observer to celebrate centenary year of modern Turkish dentistry.

VENUE: Dental Istanbul events will be held at Grand Istanbul Congress Centre II www.gicc.com.tr

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Laser technology spots cavities before they start
It might someday help lessen dentists' reliance on the dreaded drill

Using lasers to spot troubled teeth before cavities form, researchers hope to turn the dentist's drill into a relic of the 20th century.

The technology, called "Raman spectroscopy" (RS), is not brand new. In fact, scientists in other fields have long been using it to distinguish between various chemicals, based on their unique molecular fingerprints.

But this is the first time RS has been used to identify teeth in the very earliest stages of decay, the British research team said.

"The technique we are working with can tell the difference between [healthy] enamel and decaying enamel, and so in the future, if this technology is further developed, a dentist could identify early decay using it," explained study co-author Frances Downey, a graduate student with the Biomaterials, Biomimetics & Biophotonics Research Group operating out of the Dental Institute of King's College London.

Results of what Downey and her colleagues refer to as a "preliminary" effort were reported at the Microscience 2008 conference held recently in London.

The new approach to cavity prevention might be available for practical use five years down the road, Downey said. For the moment, work has been conducted solely with already extracted teeth, rather than with actual patients.

Researchers took advantage of the fact that cavities develop when the acids produced by microorganisms found in dental plaque begin to demineralise tooth enamel and produce distinct chemical changes.

By focusing RS optical fibers on individual teeth, the authors were able to track the unique light patterns that emanate from chemical compositions on either healthy or decaying enamel.

Theoretically, such a process could quickly spot tooth decay at a much earlier stage than the current screening standard, which is based on visual exams and X-rays.

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The result of such early detection might be cavity prevention, not repair, the researchers said. In essence, sites of decay could be remineralized with medicinal mouthwashes and fluoride varnishes, preventing the development of full-blown cavities and eliminating the need for dental drilling.

Study supervisor Dr. Frederic Festy said that larger studies involving patients are in the planning stages.

"However, that is not to say dentist drills would become obsolete," said Downey. She and her team noted that, in its current form, the screening procedure would be both expensive and time-consuming. "I think there will always be those of us who like our sweets a bit too much, and visit the dentist too infrequently, to keep them in business," she said.

But Charlie Brown, national counsel for Consumers for Dental Choice, based in Washington, D.C., hailed the innovation as an "excellent development."

"Anything that means that there might be fewer filling materials used in the mouth is a tremendously positive development," Brown said. "I salute any technology that will scan the mouth and prevent cavities before they occur, so we can try to have the least intervention in the mouth as possible."