Dear reader,

These really must be exciting times for anyone doing research on dental stem cells because in addition to its potential for successfully treating dental and craniomaxillofacial diseases, these cells have also been found to be useful in the therapy of a number of general conditions such as inflammatory or neural diseases, as recently demonstrated by researchers from Australia.

Cell populations with stem cell characteristics however cannot not only be found in dental pulp. Scientists have identified them in five other dental tissues including the periodontal ligament or the apical papilla.

This knowledge puts the mouth right in the forefront of efforts to fight existing and future diseases. If the therapeutic potential of these cells is finally unleashed, the saying “oral health is important for general health” will have an entirely new meaning.

Yours sincerely,
Daniel Zimmermann
Group Editor
Dental Tribune International

Perfect restorations

Restoring damaged or missing teeth has always been a tough challenge, since ancient Egypt until the present time. Rapid developments in the field of CAD/CAM systems in the last decade are bringing us closer to our goal of achieving the perfect restoration. Computers are, beyond doubt, far superior to humans in determining such critical parameters as evaluating dimensions, angles or spaces. Furthermore, what we see on the screen is often what the milling unit or 3-D printer produces.

It is the obligation of every one of us to join this fast-moving industry. We owe it to our patients, as well as to ourselves, to become acquainted with and put to use all available technology to offer the best possible treatment. I believe that digital and CAD/CAM restorations are taking over in setting the standards for dental restorations. They are precise, predictable and much easier to produce.

We are certainly coming closer to our goal. The perfect restoration appears to be just around the corner.

Yours sincerely,
Dr Munir Silwadi

Developing hand skills

In general dental practice, simple to moderate restorative cases dominate the total workload in the practice and the financial gain ratio is comparatively high in simple cases compared with full mouth rehabilitation or other complex treatment. However, it is interesting to note that our young dentists in dental practice are focusing on complex case management and not giving due priority to Class V restorations, inlays, onlays, mild anterior crowding, maintaining optimal oral hygiene, enhancing tooth colour, etc. Globally, the focus is on implant and full mouth restorations, which requires in-depth clinical knowledge and skills in simple case management first.

Personally, I always advise my trainees to develop skills in direct composite resin restorations, as a good dentist must have artistic hands. Once we understand the minute details (texture, colour, anatomy and effects) of natural teeth using direct restorations, it is easy to obtain quality work from the laboratory and achieve high clinical results. In order to treat complex cases, such as cosmetic full mouth rehabilitation, temporomandibular joint dysfunction (TMD) and sleep medicine, one must complete the required continuing education and learn clinical skills at quality training centres.

Mild and TMJ harmony dentistry are becoming quite popular because of their do no harm approach to clinical practice and simplicity in training approach that focuses on skill acquisition.

As a practising clinician and presenter of various international training programmes, I feel that every good clinician should participate in a clinical teaching programme, if possible, because this will help clinicians to remain updated and promote personal happiness by sharing their knowledge and skills for better patient care around the world.

Yours sincerely,
Dr Sushil Koirala

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