FDI, FOLA and DTI launch campaign for Haitian dentists

By Javier M. de Pison, Editor in Chief
Dental Tribune Latin America

The president of the Haitian Dental Association, Dr. Samuel Prophet, told Dental Tribune Latin America that he and several colleagues he was able to contact in Port-au-Prince were fine after the devastating earthquake in his country. “So far, we only have reports of two missing dentists,” Prophet wrote in an e-mail.

The recent earthquake not only devastated Haiti’s meager health resources, but also most dental practices. In a country there were only 500 dentists for nine million people before Jan. 12, 2010, the extent of the devastation has affected regular people and dental professionals alike.

The president of the Latin American Dental Federation (FOLA), Dr. Adolfo Rodriguez, launched a campaign immediately after the quake to help both the general population and dental professionals in Haiti.

Rodriguez, who is also the president of the Dominican Dental Association, FOLA president Adolfo Rodriguez, center, asks for help for Haiti at a meeting in Panama. Rodriguez is flanked by the president, right, and vice president of the Panama Dental Association.

Diagnose this: oral pathology

If this patient presented in your office, what diagnosis would you make? Test your skills, and expand your overall knowledge via our new oral pathology section written by experts in the field.

See page 5 for the test
See page 6 for the answer (no skipping to this page first)

Signs point to uptick for dental products industry

By Fred Michmershuizen, Online Editor

After one of the worst slumps in decades, the American economy has been showing signs of improvement in recent weeks — and several factors show better days may be ahead for the dental products industry as well.

The gross domestic product, which is considered the broadest measure of economic activity, expanded at an annual rate of 5.7 percent in the fourth quarter of 2009, its biggest jump in more than six years.

The growth followed a 2.2 percent increase the previous quarter.
Added raisins to cereal doesn’t inrease acidity of dental plaque

Elevated dental plaque acid is a risk factor that contributes to cavities in children. However, eating bran flakes with raisins containing no added sugar does not promote more acid in dental plaque than bran flakes alone, according to new research at the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Dentistry.

Some dentists believe sweet, sticky foods such as raisins cause cavities because they are difficult to clear off the tooth surfaces, said Dr. Christine Wu, professor and director of Cariology Research at the University of Illinois at Chicago College of Dentistry and lead investigator of the study.

Nevertheless, studies have shown that raisins are rapidly cleared from the surface of the teeth just like apples, bananas and chocolate, she said.

In the study, published in the journal Pediatric Dentistry, children ages 7 to 11 compared four food groups — raisins, bran flakes, commercially marketed bran cereal and a mix of bran flakes with raisins lacking any added sugar.

Sucking unsweetened raisins, bran flakes did not increase plaque acid compared to bran flakes alone. However, eating commercially marketed raisin bran led to significantly more acid in the plaque, the researchers reported.

Plaque bacteria on tooth surfaces can ferment various sugars such as glucose, fructose or sucrose and produce acids that may promote decay. Sucrose is also used by bacteria to produce sticky sugar polymers that help the bacteria remain on tooth surfaces. Wu said, Raisins themselves do not contain sucrose. In a previous study at UIC, researchers identified several natural compounds from raisins that can inhibit the growth of some oral bacteria linked to cavities or gum disease.

The study was funded by the California Raisin Marketing Board and the UIC College of Dentistry.