“Tongue sanisation is often inconvenient”

An interview with Matthias Georgi, developer of the TS1 Tongue Sanitizer

Visitors to the BDIA Dental Showcase were among the first dental professionals to try out the TS1 Tongue Sanitizer before its official market launch in the UK. Dental Tribune had the opportunity to speak with developer and company director Matthias Georgi in Birmingham at the show about the product and how it can improve an often neglected clinical problem.

Dental Tribune: Could you describe, in short, the functionality of the product? Matthias Georgi: The TS1 was developed for use in professional care and exclusively for use in dental practices. It is simply attached to the saliva ejector of the suction unit. It is important to note that the cap at the end of the saliva ejector has to be removable in order to be compatible with the TS1. The backside of the TS1 with knobs and a depression in the middle allows for easy application and rubbing in of the tongue gel, which is already widely used at dental practices. With this process, the biofilm on the tongue is broken up and the gel is evenly distributed over the tongue. Next, the TS1 is turned over to suction the residue and remove it permanently via gentle serpentine movement of the laminae side. Since the biofilm is removed mechanically, the device is very effective even without the tongue gel. Owing to its flavour, however, the gel intensifies the feeling of freshness for the patient.

What are the short- and long-term advantages of the system? Owing to the gag reflex, among other things, tongue sanitation using common techniques and materials is often inconvenient for both the hygienist and the patient. With the TS1, the result of the tongue sanitisation is immediately visible. Its design, incorporating soft synthetic elements, allows gentle, pressure-free, mild cleaning of the tongue without irritating or traumatizing the papillae on the surface. The direct advantage of using the TS1 is that, compared with common methods of cleaning, like using a polishing brush and a tongue scraper, the device removes most of the contamination before finishing the cleaning process. Similar to toothbrushing during and after a professional tooth cleaning, it is important that the patient continue the tongue cleaning at home for a long-term effect. For this, a toothbrush and basic tongue scraper will suffice.

Is there any research that confirms the effectiveness of the TS1? Similar to tooth cleaning, the medical relevance of tongue cleaning has been the subject of debate, without any concrete results. Hence, we are currently working with key opinion leaders on studies that will compare our device and tongue scrapers in terms of acceptance and efficacy. Furthermore, we conducted wide-scale user tests during development with a group of German hygienists, who are still supporting and advising us in this process. In the UK, we recently started initial tests involving local hygienists, for which we have gained support from the British Society of Dental Hygiene and Therapy. Practical relevance is very important to us.

When will the device be available in Britain and is it available for testing? The official launch is planned for December 2015. We are currently in talks with several potential partners to manage distribution. Until then, we are offering test samples, which can be ordered at any time. We would like to use the show to raise awareness of the product among dental professionals in the UK and as preparation for the market launch. Since we introduced the TS1 in Germany last month, feedback on the device has been overwhelming. Thank you very much for the interview.

Matthias Georgi