Getting Up to Date

Dental Tribune looks back at an informative and entertaining evening at the National Motorcycle Museum in Birmingham...

O ral-B has a great reputation for delivering high quality seminars, so I was really looking forward to the 2011 lecture series called Up To Date: Oral-B Scientific: Exchange Seminars. Aimed primarily at dentists, dental hygienists and dental therapists, the 10-date series of seminars features a selection of three well-respected speakers: Nicola West, Trevor Burke and Iain Chapple.

Each of the speakers’ presentations was based on the following:

Iain Chapple: Periodontal Medicine – a window on the internal medicine of the body. The biological base of Periodontology as a discipline is vast, as illustrated by the diverse nature of periodontal research and its intimate relationship with general health and well-being. Medical approaches to care employ a forensic and systematic approach to history-taking, physical examination and clinical investigations, focussed upon achieving a differential and ultimately definitive diagnosis. Once this is made, medical management involves treating the cause of the disorder by pharmacological or behavioural approaches and/or preventing disease onset or progression. This presentation will attempt to illustrate the enormous scope of practice of periodontal medicine, by guiding delegates through a heavily illustrated and systematic approach to investigating periodontal manifestations of systemic conditions. It will illustrate the ‘tip of the iceberg’ of this far reaching and oft neglected aspect of periodontal care.

Trevor Burke: A pragmatic approach to the treatment of tooth wear. In the past, treatment of tooth wear was often by the crowning of affected teeth, or by a full oral rehabilitation, with many teeth being crowned, with the aim of protecting their surfaces from further tooth wear. The irony, of course, being that the treatment resulted in much more massive destruction of the affected teeth than the causative factors themselves. A strange way to treat teeth which were already compromised! However, advances in bonding techniques have enabled the use of minimally invasive treatment using resin composite restorations bonded to the worn surfaces. This presentation will discuss the optimum bonding agents for the procedure, the principles of dental aesthetics and how to achieve an aesthetic improvement – the concept of pragmatic aesthetics - and will indicate the rates of success which may be expected.

Nicola West: New Concepts in Tooth Wear and Dentine Hypersensitivity. Tooth wear is a multifactorial condition of growing concern and is becoming increasingly significant in the management of our patients. People are now retaining their teeth for longer, becoming more aware of their teeth and treatment possibilities, and expecting their teeth to last them a lifetime. Although there is usually one predominant cause of wear for an individual, a number of wear processes often occur together, the most common form, especially in the younger age groups, being erosive tooth wear. One of the effects of tooth wear, erosive tooth wear combined with abrasive wear, can lead to the condition which we are all familiar with, dentine hypersensitivity. Tooth wear is a problem, but it relates to the ‘golden proportion’ and how it relates to the aesthetic preferences for dentition. After discussing some of the literature on the subject, he concluded that there is no real consensus among dentists with regard to smile design.

He then began to discuss the causes of tooth wear in relation to non-carious means: abrasion, attrition, erosion, abfraction, resorption. Particular attention was placed on erosion, which has been an emerging topic over the last few years and now is at the forefront of oral care methodology. Many of the causes of erosion are lifestyle related ie acidic drinks, gastric reflux, medication side effects. Prof Burke then moved onto the treatment of tooth wear: the use of bonding to dentine techniques, the ‘Dahl’ principle, composites.

This was an interesting event, for me personally I found Prof Chapple’s presentation fascinating because of the potential dentists have to save lives (in fact Prof Chapple has said that I care studies), he illustrated the need for knowledge and limitations in examination when looking for signs of underlying disease.

He discussed the importance of the medical history as this can give clues as to what could be going on. Couple this with the examination process, which starts as soon as the patient enters the surgery, and it becomes clear that it is possible to help a medical diagnosis using oral diagnostic tools.

Prof Chappelle concluded his presentation with five main tips:

- Periodontal medicine is a large subject, but we don’t see what we don’t look for
- Non-surgical treatment of medical problems surgically
- Avoid gingival biopsies
- Consider potential for multiple clinical investigations with care

Next it was the turn of Philip Bellamy, a principal researcher at Oral-B, to showcase the company’s latest innovation in its research – Dental Plaque Imaging Analysis (DPIA). This diagnostic tool allows researchers to score plaque levels during research in an objective and reproducible way, standardising their research for future analysis.

After coffee it was time to hear Trevor Burke discuss a pragmatic approach to tooth wear. Prof Burke began by discussing Tooth wear, the ‘golden proportion’ and how it relates to the aesthetic preferences for dentition. After discussing some of the literature on the subject, he concluded that there is no real consensus among dentists with regard to smile design.

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