Implants see fastest growth in emerging markets

By Daniel Zimmermann, Group Editor
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Premium manufacturers are driving the market for dental implants and bone-craft substitutes in countries such as China and India, according to iData Research.

In a market report, the Canada-based consulting company has forecasted the market volume of both countries for dental implants to exceed $400 million by the year 2017.

Strong double-digit growth rates were also predicted for Brazil, another potent global emerging market. The rapid growth of dental implants will also drive the market for dental biomaterials and bone-craft substitutes, the report states.

The number of procedures using these materials is expected to reach almost 400,000 in both countries by 2017.

“The de-regulation of dental care services in China and India has fueled growth of private dental clinics in major urban centers,” said Dr. Kamran Zamanian, CEO of iData.

“In addition, the low cost of labor has kept implant procedural costs relatively low, promoting dental tourism from countries such as Japan, South Korea and Australia.”

Markets in China and India are currently dominated by a few foreign manufacturers such as Dentsply-Friadent, Nobel Biocare or Straumann.

The Swiss-based company particularly has increased its market share in China and South Eastern Asia with the introduction of products including the Bone Level Implant and SLActive dental implant surface technology.

Global business consultant Frost & Sullivan recently awarded the company with its 2010 Asia Pacific Dental Implant Company of the Year Award for superior performance in different areas such as strategic product development.

Europe still holds the largest share of the $5.2 billion global dental implant market followed by the United States, Korea and Japan.

The market itself is projected to grow by more than 20 percent during the next five years.

Healthy gums may lead to healthy lungs

Maintaining periodontal health may contribute to a healthy respiratory system, according to research published in the Journal of Periodontology. A new study suggests that periodontal disease may increase the risk for respiratory infections, such as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and pneumonia. These infections, which are caused when bacteria from the upper throat are inhaled into the lower respiratory tract, can be severely debilitating and are one of the leading causes of death in the United States.

The study included 200 participants between the ages of 20 and 60 with at least 20 natural teeth. Half of the participants were hospitalized patients with a respiratory disease such as pneumonia, COPD or acute bronchitis, and the other half were healthy control subjects with no history of respiratory disease. Each participant underwent a comprehensive oral evaluation to measure periodontal health status.

The study found that patients with respiratory diseases had worse periodontal health than the control group, suggesting a relationship between respiratory disease and periodontal disease. Researchers suspect that the presence of oral pathogens associated with periodontal disease may increase a patient’s risk of developing or exacerbating respiratory disease. However, the study authors note that additional studies are needed to more conclusively understand this link.

“Pulmonary diseases can be severely disabling and debilitating,” said Donald S. Clem, DDS, president of the American Academy of Periodontology. “By working with...