NEWS


[PICTURE: ©JOSE AS REYES]

Herbal lollipops may

Fight periodontal pathogens

Researchers from the US have found new evidence that glycyrrhizol A from the Chinese herb Glycyrrhiza uralensis, more commonly known as licorice root, in lollipops improves oral health. In a recent study, they found that the herbal compound reduced the activity of the main agents of periodontal disease and tooth decay.

In the *in vitro* study, researchers from the University of Iowa inoculated agar plates with a number of pathogens, including agents associated with periodontal disease, such as *Porphyromonas gingivalis, Prevotella intermedia, Tannerella forsythia* and *Streptococcus mutans*, which causes dental caries.

"The results suggest that the sugar-free herbal lollipops may play a role in decreasing the levels of certain periodontal pathogens in the oral cavity," the researchers concluded. "More research, including clinical research, is needed to assess the efficacy of glycyrrhizol A in reducing periodontal pathogens," they added.

Glycyrrhizol A is isolated from the Chinese plant Glycyrrhiza uralensis. Another study, published in the *Journal of Natural Products* in 2011, also found that the substance has antibacterial properties. The researchers reported that it killed the main bacteria responsible for tooth decay and gum disease. The findings were presented at the International Association for Dental Research's annual meeting last month.

Emotional intelligence affects

Dentist–patient relationship

Educators at Case Western Reserve University wondered why some high-performing students did not fare as well in the clinic. The researchers thus examined whether EI was a determining factor.

The study involved 100 third- and fourth-year students from the university's School of Dental Medicine, who completed a questionnaire about self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management. Their overall clinical performance, including diagnosis, treatment planning skills, organisation and patient management, was assessed by two preceptors.

After a thorough analysis, the researchers found a correlation between high EI scores and high clinical performance. They said that EI skills in self-management, which involves self-control, initiative, trustworthiness and adaptability, were significant predictors of clinical


[PICTURE: ©LUCKY BUSINESS]

grades. However, no such correlation with self- and social awareness was found. In addition, the researchers found the EI scores regarding relationship management difficult to determine owing to the transient nature of the interaction between student and patient during the two-year training. The study, titled "What is the Relationship Between Emotional Intelligence and Dental School Clinical Performance?" was published in the April issue of the Journal of *Dental Research.*

Launch of

Israeli society of laser dentistry

Recently, the Israel Association of Laser Dentistry (ISLD) was launched at an event sponsored by international dental laser technology provider Syneron Dental Lasers in collaboration with Oral-B. Many Israeli practitioners from all over the country joined the event at the Dan Tel Aviv Hotel. The society aims to advance laser dentistry in Israel.

ISLD is the result of the joint vision of and intensive collaboration between Prof. Adam Stabholz, the Dean of the Hadassah School of Dental Medicine at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and Ira Prigat, President and CEO of Syneron Dental Lasers. The founders hope that it will help promote awareness of the important role of dental lasers in oral treatment in Israel by encouraging research and other activities to advance the field of laser dentistry among Israeli dentists. Prigat said that country's dental market and citizens will benefit from the initiative.


[PICTURE: ©YURI ARCURS]

"The idea was to launch the ISLD as a forum for sharing and exchange among scientists, clinicians and the industry's dental laser companies that are providing the technology and making it available at dental clinics. The ISLD will establish hands-on practice seminars, education, training and regular meetings to study the various laser technology solutions," Stabholz said.

Fear of tooth loss greater than

Fear of root-canal treatment



[PICTURE: ©ARTFAMILY]

Although it is generally believed that root-canal treatment is considered one of the most unpleasant medical procedures by the majority of patients, a recent survey has revealed that most people are more afraid of losing their permanent teeth than undergoing root-canal treatment or getting the flu—despite the particularly high flu activity this season. The survey was conducted at the beginning of the year by members of the American Association of Endodontics. Among other findings, they found that 74 per cent of survey participants hoped to avoid losing a permanent tooth, while 73 per cent said that they wanted to avoid the flu. In addition, 70 per cent of the participants said that they would avoid undergoing root-canal treatment and 60 per cent were more anxious about root-canal treatment than getting a tooth pulled (57 per cent) or receiving a dental implant (54 per cent). According to the association, an estimated 15.1 million root-canal treatments were performed in 2005 and 2006, of which 10.9 million (72 per cent) were performed by general dentists and 4.2 million (28 per cent) by endodontists.

The survey was conducted in preparation for the seventh annual Root Canal Awareness Week taking place in the US from March 17 to 23. The aim of the program is to encourage collaboration between general dentists and endodontists in order to preserve patients' natural teeth and to help anxious patients. Several documents about the subject can be downloaded free from the association's website.



[PICTURE: ©URFIN]

US adults delay dental care

Due to uncertain economy

A survey of more than 1,000 US adults has revealed that 36 per cent have delayed or would delay dental treatments owing to their current financial situation. Although more than 80 per cent knew about the long-term financial implications of neglecting oral health, many people seemed to put dental care off until they experienced significant pain or had a dental emergency, the investigators said. The survey involved 501 men and 504 women aged 18 and older. It was conducted as a telephone survey by market research agency ORC International on behalf of Aspen Dental, one of the largest networks of dental care providers in the US, between Feb. 28 and March 3. Overall, the results were in line with other studies that found a general decline in health care spending. More than 30 per cent of the people surveyed reported that their net salary was lower this year than in 2012. Moreover, 44 per cent had no dental insurance. The number was especially high among those with an annual income below $35,000 (61 per cent), the investigators said. They also found that only 1 in 10 agreed that routine dental visits were critical to their overall well-being.

"The survey is a stark reminder of the need to improve public understanding about the importance of dental care to overall health, as well as create a better understanding about the long-term effects of ignoring dental visits, including the link between gum disease and other serious conditions such as diabetes and stroke," said Dr Nathan Laughrey, who runs a number of Aspen Dental practices.

Parents' saliva (on pacifiers) reduces

Allergy risk in infants

Researchers from Sweden have suggested that parental saliva stimulates a baby's immune system owing to the altered oral flora and thus reduces the risk of allergy development. In a study of almost 200 infants, they found that children whose parents sucked their pacifiers to clean them during the first six months of life had a significantly reduced risk of eczema and asthma.



[PICTURE: ©WAVEBREAKMEDIA]

The study involved 184 children whose mothers were recruited between 1998 and 2003 from a larger European allergy study at the Mölndal Hospital in Gothenburg, Sweden, when they were still pregnant.

Overall, the study suggested that parental pacifier sucking could be a simple and safe method to reduce allergy development in infants and young children. However, further studies are needed to confirm the findings.

According to the researchers, parental cleaning of the pacifier by sucking was associated with a decreased risk of allergy development. The incidence of both eczema and asthma was greatly reduced in children whose parents sucked their pacifier. In addition, the analysis found that parents of vaginally delivered infants were more likely to have this habit than parents of infants delivered by caesarean section were.

The study, titled "Pacifier cleaning practices and the risk of allergy development", was published online on 6 May in the *Pediatrics Journal* ahead of print.