What’s Happening Around the Globe?

Intelligent Oral Prophylaxis

Lifelong effective protection against oral disease—promoting health and aesthetics—a main topic at the IDS

In the past, prophylactic treatment of patients was regarded as a localized preventive measure, but it has now become a lifestyle factor for modern people with high, wide-ranging demands. Healthy, beautiful teeth are a sign of vitality and attractiveness, indirect factors in a person’s success. In modern dentistry there is now clear evidence of the relationship between oral health and general health. These are important aspects that can motivate patients, so prophylaxis therefore begins by promoting the correct mental attitude. At the IDS, the International Dental Show in Cologne (20-24 March 2007), the global dental industry will present innovative products, techniques and services that promote effective cooperation between the dentist, prophylactic team and patient in conserving and restoring good health.

Specialist dental societies and dentist associations are focusing increasingly on prophylactic treatment in theory and practice, and have found that rational concepts for preventive dentistry are based on a structured diagnosis using scientifically proven dental and medical techniques. The universal principle is now to prevent damage by early detection of the symptoms of disease and to restore teeth using minimally invasive treatment that deals with the cause of the problem.

Standard, mechanical plaque removal by brushing the teeth daily remains an important factor in oral hygiene. The trend towards electronic toothbrushes is still strong, with the latest generation incorporating a computer display that helps users check and improve their cleaning technique. There have also been further developments in manual toothbrushes: innovatively designed brush heads facilitate effective oral hygiene. At present the main focus is on manual toothbrushes for patients with sensitive or hypersensitive teeth. These very gentle toothbrushes are supplied with special toothpastes and mouthwashes as a complete system.

Professional scaling and polishing, curettage and root planing are becoming less and less invasive. Clinical studies confirm the personal experience of many practitioners: modern ultrasonic or airbrasive units can improve patient compliance and are therefore at least as effective as standard techniques using manual instruments. A balanced combination of improved personal and professional prophylactic measures provides the best chance of preventing tooth loss or considerably delaying it. This is becoming increasingly important because people are living longer and are more self-assured. For this reason it is also becoming increasingly important to inhibit dental caries and periodontitis.

Complete prophylactic concepts covering early detection, diagnosis, professional scaling and polishing, curettage and root planing, treatment with medication as well as personal oral hygiene, offer the best means of achieving excellent oral health. Patient-oriented consultation on the prophylactic measures available is an integral part of a comprehensive communication process. This ensures that patients recognize the importance of their cooperation in restoring and conserving their health. It is highly differentiated early diagnosis in evaluating the individual risk of caries and periodontitis. Malocclusion, bite anomalies or tumourous changes can now also be diagnosed at a much earlier stage than even a few years ago. This makes it easier for the dentist to ensure that every patient receives optimum care and treatment.

Oral prophylaxis also benefits from the close network of interdisciplinary research in dentistry, medicine and the natural sciences. The use of microbiological and molecular biological techniques (e.g., gene probe test and PCR) allows consultation on the prophylactic measures available is an integral part of a comprehensive communication process. This ensures that patients recognize the importance of their cooperation in restoring and conserving their health. It is highly differentiated early diagnosis in evaluating the individual risk of caries and periodontitis. Malocclusion, bite anomalies or tumourous changes can now also be diagnosed at a much earlier stage than even a few years ago. This makes it easier for the dentist to ensure that every patient receives optimum care and treatment.

Any practice that fully exploits these concepts can expect a high degree of patient compliance, which is also evident in the high number of patients attending recall appointments. In this way a long-term association with the dental practice is also established.

“Visitors to the International Dental Show, the world’s largest dentistry/dental technology exhibition to be held in Cologne from 20-24 March 2007, will discover how the dentist, prophylactic team and patient can successfully work together, and which innovative techniques, products and concepts as well as services are coming onto the market. The spectrum ranges from all types of prophylactic materials to diagnostic units and techniques, instruments and a full range of equipment for the dental practice as part of a comprehensive prophylactic concept,” explained Dr. Markus Heibach, Executive Director of the Association of the German Dental Manufacturers (VDDI). “There are numerous opportunities at the IDS to talk shop and exchange ideas with top experts.”

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