Study confirms Asians are at greater risk of periodontal disease

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SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., USA: Ethnicity has long been thought to play a role in the susceptibility of patients to gingival recession. A new study from the US has now offered new evidence for the clinical assumption that Asians are more prone to attachment loss owing to their unique dental and gingival morphology.

In a clinical evaluation measuring the length of teeth and roots from dental radiographs, students and clinicians from the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF) found a high incidence of shorter root lengths and forms in Asian populations, which they suggest represents a larger risk of attachment loss. In addition, a high percentage of the patients exhibited a thin gingival biotype with a gingival width of between only 3 and 5 mm.

Overall, 40 patients from Japan, China, South Korea and Vietnam were observed with no significant pattern deviation between the various ethnic Asian groups.

According to the researchers, the recent findings are in line with data reported by Stanley Nelson and Major Ash in 2010, who found similar tooth-root ratios in those in the UCSF study. Combined with a thin gingival biotype, patients with such a short root morphology might be at greater risk of periodontal destruction and developing periodontal disease, they stated. They said that dental practitioners should consider these factors when monitoring and treating periodontal disease in Asian patients. In particular, “a clinician’s adjustment for the shorter root length,” they advise in the report.

A higher incidence of periodontal problems in Asian populations has previously been linked to factors like poor oral hygiene and inadequate access to oral health care.

Kuraray Noritake expands production

The Japanese dental market leader Kuraray Noritake has announced a third production site. The new plant in Tainai City in the Niigata Prefecture was recently put into operation in the presence of company president Sadaaki Matsuyama and executive officer Osamu Yamada.

According to official statements, the Niigata plant is intended to replace the existing Noritake production facility in Kurashiki, which will see a significant cut-back in the upcoming months. With a projected production volume of 1.1 million units per year, the facility in Niigata is hoped to become Kuraray Noritake’s largest production site in Japan, the company stated.

Bacteria harbour on bib clips

U.S. researchers have reported that a significant proportion of dental bib clips harboured bacteria from the patient, dental clinician and the environment even after the clips had undergone standard disinfection procedures. Forty per cent of the clips tested retained one or more aerobic bacteria.

Low tax compliance among dentists

The Filipinos government has reached out to the Philippine Dental Association and other organisations to urge their members to return their files before the 2012 tax return deadline. Tax returns from non-paying self-employed professionals are currently estimated at P360 billion (US$8.7 billion).

City police in New Zealand’s largest city Auckland have recently uncovered a major welfare scam involving a bogus dental clinic. Two suspects running the facility in the Papatoetoe suburb were arrested for having claimed benefits worth NZ$550,000 (US$290,000) for emergency treatment that was never administered from the Ministry of Social Development since 2011.

The latest arrest is considered a major success of the ministry’s recently launched Welfare Fraud Collaborative Action Programme, a nationwide partnership between different agencies to combat welfare fraud. Among other goals, the initiative aims to enhance the sharing of information between all agencies involved in providing welfare in order to detect irregularities sooner.

According to ministry figures, false benefits worth more than NZ$40 million (US$34.6 million) were claimed by individuals in New Zealand last year.