Record number of courses at ADA meeting

Event includes live-patient demonstrations and more than 300 workshops and courses

With a record number of hands-on workshops, education-in-the-round live-patient demonstrations, hands-on cadaver workshops and open and clinical science forums, the American Dental Association Annual Session has educational opportunities covering virtually every aspect of dentistry.

The event runs from Oct. 31–Nov. 3 in New Orleans, with some preconference courses also on the agenda. Attendees can select from more than 300 lectures and interactive learning experiences, including advanced courses, “Fast Tracks,” “Presidential Whistle Stop,” “Progressive Perio,” “ADA Town Hall,” “Social Media Panel” and, of course, unlimited opportunity to exchange ideas with colleagues from across the globe.

There also are learning opportunities on the exhibit hall floor, with “ADA CE Live,” which includes hands-on opportunities with some of the industry’s latest technology and solutions. The exhibit hall also includes the new “Health and Fitness Center” and “Dental Office Design Center” making their debut at the 2013 meeting.

Among the most recent courses to be added to the agenda are learning labs and super sessions on “Women in Dentistry” and “Geriatric Patient Care.” The learning labs are a new type of interactive course for the meeting, featuring physical tools designed to engage both sides of a participant’s brain — with the intent of opening the discussion of what was covered in the super session on Oct. 31. Photo/By Jeff Anding, New Orleans Convention & Visitors Bureau

In the super sessions, attendees can further the discussion of what was covered in the smaller learning labs. Sketches, audio commentary and photos of the activities in the learning lab will be shared so a note of the American Dental Association’s 154th Annual Session and World Marketplace Exhibition, from Oct. 31 to Nov. 3, brings together leaders in dental practice, research, academia and industry to present more than 300 continuing education courses. President Bill Clinton will speak at the opening general session, on Oct 31. Photo/By Jeff Anding, New Orleans Convention & Visitors Bureau

• See pages A3–A6
Esthetic dentistry may not make patients happier

When assessing patients for esthetic dental procedures, it might be just as important to evaluate mental health as oral health. Recent research suggests that some patients who are dissatisfied with their appearance will feel the same after such dental work, no matter how objectively successful a procedure is.

This is a finding in a study by Sharmila Sarin, supervised by Dr. Koula Asimakopoulou, and colleagues from King’s College London. The team presented its research, “In pursuit of the perfect smile: predictors of satisfaction with esthetic dental treatment,” in September at the British Psychological Society’s Division of Health Psychology annual conference in Brighton, England.

In the study, 60 participants completed the Slade Body Satisfaction Scale and a “visual analogue scale” assessing satisfaction with their appearance before and after their dental work. Each also completed a short version of the “Big Five” personality test before his or her procedure.

Happier before means happier after

Irrespective of the dental work performed, people who were happiest about their appearance before receiving esthetic dental treatment were those that were the happiest after treatment; dissatisfaction with one’s appearance seen in those measuring high in neuroticism persisted after esthetic dental work.

According to Sarin and Asimakopoulou, “We wanted to establish whether personality and the views that people have about their appearance before receiving esthetic dental treatment would influence satisfaction with the outcomes of esthetic dental procedures.

“We found that it is in the patients’ and dentists’ interest to ensure that patients receiving esthetic dental work start from as high a point of satisfaction with current appearance as possible. This will enhance the chances that they will be satisfied with the results of esthetic dental treatment. Neuroticism is also likely to interfere with satisfaction with esthetic dental work.”

The conclusion: Dentists need the support of psychologists to enhance patients’ satisfaction with their appearance before embarking on esthetic dental procedures.

(Sources: King’s College London, The British Psychological Society and Science News Daily)