access to oral health care for older adults

Capitol Hill event advocates for increased access to oral health care for older adults

By Jodie Heimbach, RDH, BS

Oral Health America (OHA) and Oral Healthcare Can’t Wait, an initiative of the Dental Trade Alliance, brought together dozens of oral-health leaders on Capitol Hill to address the challenges facing older Americans with access to oral health care. The event, “Aging in America: You Can’t Be Healthy Without Good Oral Health,” featured Ellie Hollander, president and CEO of Meals on Wheels America, as keynote speaker and recognized Dr. David Satcher as the 2015 recipient of the Marvin Goldstein Outstanding Public Service Award for his dedicated leadership in improving public health in the United States. Satcher served as U.S. Surgeon General from 1998 to 2002, releasing the first ever Surgeon General’s report on oral health during his tenure.

“It is a special occasion for me and I express my deepest appreciation for this award,” said Satcher, founder of the Satcher Health Leadership Institute of the Morehouse School of Medicine. “The theme ‘Aging in America: You Can’t Be Healthy Without Good Oral Health’ is a very important theme, and it is also a very special year. It is the 50th anniversary of Medicare and Medicaid and the Older Americans’ Act, very important anniversaries in the history of our country as it relates to health and health care.”

The Capitol Hill event was part of OHA’s annual Fall for Smiles campaign, which educates Americans every September and October about the importance of maintaining a healthy mouth through daily brushing and flossing, making regular dental visits, eating healthy foods and avoiding tobacco products. According to a recent survey commissioned by OHA and conducted by Harris Interactive, one in four American families experienced trouble chewing, having trouble trying to afford their next meal, we’re generally talking about those in the greatest social and economic need. Research tells us that poor dental health of course drives health care costs,” said Hollander. “We both have the same challenge if we do not address these inextricably linked issues.”

OHA staff and board members are asking members of Congress to pass the Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2015, restore funding for all programs within the Older Americans Act to pre-sequestration levels, support family caregivers through the Recognize, Assist, Include, Support and Engage (RAISE) Family Caregivers Act and support workforce innovations to increase access to care. Fall for Smiles is sponsored by 3M ESPE, Dentasave Foundation, Dentsply, Hu-Friedy, Listerine, Midmark, National Dental Association, Oral Healthcare Can’t Wait, Patterson Dental, Sunstar, Trident and Whip Mix.

(Source: Oral Health America)

Offering your patients alcohol-free products

By Jodie Heimbach, RDH, BS

Fluoride or no fluoride, compact toothbrush or full size toothbrush, coronal polishing first or polish last. The decisions necessary in the dental practice are numerous and many times are based upon personal choice.

How and when does the dental professional decide whether to eliminate alcohol products from the practice or limit the recommendation of products that contain a high quantity of alcohol?

The debate continues as to whether alcohol may be drying of the oral tissues, but substance abuse disorders are part of the human condition and touch as many as one in four American families.

If you are considering a reduction in the amount of alcohol used within product recommendations where should the dental professional begin?

One of the most common products the dental professional may recommend is chlorhexidine gluconate (CHX). CHX has been considered the gold standard for the reduction of biologic and gingival inflammation. Chlorhexidine is an anti-septic mouthrinse that is bactericidal and effective against some forms of yeasts and viruses. Most chlorhexidine mouthrinses contain 1.6 percent alcohol. If one were seeking an alternative to reduce alcohol by 1.6 percent, Sunstar America provides the clinician with GUM® Paroex®, the only FDA-approved alcohol-free 0.12 percent chlorhexidine gluconate mouthrinse.

GUM Paroex

To keep patients healthier and reduce the risk of allergies, many dental offices are now latex-free and also now moving toward no-alcohol. In a similar principal, why not create an alcohol-free practice that will benefit the oral health of your patients without the irritation of alcohol? The GUM Paroex Chlorhexidine was tested beside Periex® and Periogard® to evaluate the effectiveness compared with products that contain alcohol. Results showed there was no difference in effectiveness between the alcohol-free and the others. The alcohol-free chlorhexidine was as effective as one containing alcohol in controlling plaque and reducing gingival inflammation.

GUM Paroex is ideal for immune compromised patients challenged with mucositis or patients who are receiving head and neck radiation. GUM Paroex also can be considered as a post-operative treatment following peridontal procedures and for a pre-procedural rinse in the office to protect patients and the dental team by reducing airborne bacteria.

Chlorhexidine may also be used in caries control programs. Because dental caries are a bacterial infection, an antimicrobial such as chlorhexidine may be indicated to reduce caries.

Additional concerns may be the individual who is suffering with xerostomia, ulcerative gingivitis and tissue damage, these conditions may be exacerbated by alcohol. Alcohol-free products allow the patients with alcohol dependency who may not reveal their full health history.

Using a product with 11.6 percent alcohol is not necessary when there is an alcohol-free alternative that is clinically equivalent. Paroex is dispensed in a 16 oz. bottle that may be purchased at the dental office or by prescription from the local pharmacy. (A new 4 oz. bottle was introduced in 2014.) The dental professional can feel secure in dispensing an FDA-approved alcohol-free chlorhexidine to patients for periodontal maintenance, immunosuppressed conditions, post-surgical care and pre-procedural rinsing.

GUM Rincinol

GUM Rincinol® is a mouthrinse that provides whole-mouth pain relief. It is the first non-prescription bio-adherent mucosal coating for long-lasting soft tissue pain relief. The pain relief may occur in less than three minutes and has been reported to last for up to six hours. In addition, it does not contain alcohol or benzoic acid.

The lack of alcohol and benzoic acid will reduce stinging and burning sensations, or any post-treatment numbing effects. GUM Rincinol will comfort patients with aphthous ulcers, denture sores, irritation from orthodontic appliances, removable prosthetics, post-oral surgery, scaling and/or root planning procedures, mucositis, xerostomia and any other intraoral irritation. Many dental professionals recommend the soothing rinse for use with those undergoing chemotherapy and radiation treatments.

GUM Rincinol promotes healing because it contains aloe. It is safe for use in adults and children ages 6 and up and is even safe if accidentally ingested. Each application lasts up to six hours, but will depend on the daily diet regimen. The product may be purchased in a pack of 32.
Barrier protection critical with any dental-care glove

While caring for their patients, dental and health care professionals are constantly exposed to bodily fluids that may carry viruses and other infectious agents. It is therefore critical that the gloves these professionals use provide the best possible barrier protection.

Many types of gloves are available today, but it is important to know that not all gloves have the same barrier capability, depending on the type of material used. For example, natural rubber latex gloves have long been acknowledged for their very effective barrier properties, while non-latex gloves, such as vinyl and polyisoprene, perform much better than non-latex gloves, such as natural rubber latex gloves. Using gloves with stringent technical specifications to ensure the gloves are high in barrier effectiveness, low in protein and low in allergy risks, in addition to having excellent comfort, fit and durability — qualities that manufacturers of many synthetic gloves are trying to replicate.

Natural, sustainable resource

Latex gloves are green products, derived from a natural and sustainable resource, and are environmentally friendly. (You can learn more online by visiting www.smg-gloves.com or www.latexglove.info).

The use of low-protein, powder-free synthetic gloves has been demonstrated by many independent hospital studies to mark-edly reduce the incidence of latex sensitization and allergic reactions in work-places. More importantly, latex allergic in-

**References**

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**For important safety information on GUM Paroex: ACCESS professional oralhealth.com/uspurt-chlorhexidine-glucosamine-oral-rinse-609.html**

(Source: Sunstar America)
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Lead: Is it in your varnish?

Metal-free and thanks in part to the natural rosin, StarBright has one of highest fluoride release rates

By Nanova Biomaterials Staff

What is more important in your practice: Patient care quality or perception? There are pros and cons to everything in life, and fluoride varnish is no exception. In the past few years, there has been a movement toward using white (hydrogenated) rosin in fluoride varnish, based solely on the preference of esthetics over efficacy. If you are using a hydrogenated white varnish, your practice has chosen a misinformed perception of varnish capabilities over high-quality patient care.

There are many factors that affect fluoride release of a varnish. A major contributor is the base material — in many cases rosin. Products that solely use hydrogenated white rosin consistently have lower fluoride release compared with StarBright.

Hydrogenated rosins undergo an additional chemical process, which bleaches the rosin by heating the material with hydrogen gas over a metal catalyst — lead, aluminum, nickel, platinum and/or palladium. The second stage of the process removes much of the metal residue as possible, but it never completely removes these metals.

In addition to the issue of using metal, the chemical processing of the hydrogenated white rosin causes the varnish to be less adhesive than natural-based rosins. Most of the varnishes using this processed rosin do not adhere well to teeth, and those that initially stick to the surface wear off in a few hours after application. When you attempt to brush the varnish off your teeth, and you do not see the varnish on your toothbrush, it proves it is not still adhering at that point. This means that your patients have a much higher possibility of swallowing the fluoride, as well as ingesting trace amounts of metal.

Natural rosins do not use chemicals or metals to change the color of varnish before being added to the varnish. The natural rosins are heated in a still to allow the unwanted materials to be filtered out through phase separation.

StarBright 5 percent sodium fluoride varnish, manufactured by Nanova Biomaterials Inc., uses a natural-based rosin, eliminating the risks of your patients ingesting chemically altered rosin. It is sweetened with Xylitol and comes in five flavors: caramel, bubblegum, mint, strawberry and cinnamon.

Due in large part to the natural rosin, StarBright has one of the highest fluoride release rates on the market, according to Nanova Biomaterials. It actually stays on the teeth, ensuring the fluoride goes to the tooth and not the trouser.

Wireless and unconnected

‘WireLess’ headlight is self-contained

LED DayLite WireLess is not limited to one pair of loupes or a specific eyeglass frame

Designs for Vision’s new LED DayLite Wireless™ not only frees you from being tethered to a battery pack, but the simple modular design also uncouples the “Wireless” light from a specific frame or single pair of loupes. Prior technology required a cordless light to one pair of loupes via a cumbersome integration of the batteries and electronics into the frame. The compact design of the DayLite WireLess is independent of any frame/loupes.

The patent-pending design of the LED DayLite WireLess is a new concept: a self-contained headlight that can integrate with various platforms, including your existing loupes, safety eyewear, lightweight headbands and future loupes or eyewear purchases. The LED DayLite WireLess is not limited to one pair of loupes or built into a specific eyeglass frame. The LED DayLite WireLess can be transferred from one platform to another, expanding your “WireLess” illumination possibilities across your eyewear options.

1.4 ounces

The LED DayLite WireLess weighs only 1.4 ounces and, when attached to a pair of loupes, the combined weight is half the weight of integrated cordless lights/loupes. The LED DayLite WireLess produces more than 40,000 lux at high intensity and 27,000 lux at medium intensity. The spot size of the LED DayLite WireLess will illuminate the entire oral cavity. The function of the headlight is controlled via capacitive touch.

The LED DayLite WireLess is powered by a compact, rechargeable lithium-ion power pod. It comes complete with three power pods. The charging cradle enables you to independently recharge two power pods at the same time and clearly displays the progress of each charge cycle.

Designs for Vision has been showing the Micro Series together for the first time this fall. The Micro 5.5X Scopes use a revolutionary optical design that reduces the size of the prismatic telescope by 50 percent and reduces the weight by 40 percent, while providing an expanded field full-oral-cavity view at 5.5x magnification.

The new Micro 2.5X Scopes are 23 percent smaller and 36 percent lighter than traditional 2.5X telescopes, and enlarge the entire oral cavity at true 2.5x magnification.

The Micro Series is fully customized and uses the proprietary lens coatings for the greatest light transmission.

You can “See the Visible Difference® yourself by visiting the Designs for Vision booths, Nos. 4012 and 4625 at the Greater New York Dental Meeting. Or arrange a visit in your office by calling (800) 345-4009 or emailing info@dvnmail.com.

(Source: Designs For Vision)
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