Cool stuff for your practice

Buzzy device makes injections easier for kids

By Fred Michmershuizen, Online Editor

For children, getting an injection can be quite traumatic. That's why most dentists would probably agree that just about anything that can be done to make "getting a shot" easier is certainly welcome. With that in mind, meet Buzzy — a reusable FDA class I pain relief device.

It's the brainchild of Amy Baxter, MD, a pediatrician who developed it to ease the pain that children feel when getting shots at doctors offices. But it works just as well for dental injections.

"The physiology is pretty basic," Baxter told Dental Tribune during an interview at the recent Thomas P. Hinman Meeting in Atlanta. "The combination of a frozen cold pack and vibration block the sharp pain nerves when pressed proximal to the pain."

There's scientific evidence to back that up. Baxter and four other doctors conducted a randomized clinical trial, the results of which were published in the September/October 2009 issue of Clinical Journal of Pain. The study found that the combined cold and vibration sensations decreased injection pain "significantly."

"The 'wiggling the cheek' thing dentists have always done is called 'gate theory nerve blockade,'" Baxter explained. "Buzzy does the same thing but with added cold." For palatal injections administered in a dental office, she said, simply press Buzzy to the maxilla or zygomatic arch. "It's effective in about 15 seconds," she said.

The reusable device looks like a bumblebee and has freezeable gel "wings." It's available from MMJ Labs, an Atlanta-based company that also makes Bee-tractor cards, which allow parents to get involved in pain distraction by asking their kids questions that are written on the back of the cards about pictures on the front.

More information on these products is available online, at www.buzzy4shots.com.

Versatilt: wheelchair patients recline in comfort

Dentists might find it awkward to treat patients who are in wheelchairs. For those who can't be transferred into a dental chair, it might be difficult to perform work if the patients can't be reclined.

REDpoint International, a Vancouver, Wash.-based company that designs, develops and markets innovative medical devices, has come up with a solution.

The Versatilt allows wheelchair patients to be tilted, while in their wheelchairs, to a degree that is optimal for providing professional patient care in the best ergonomic positions possible.

Chuck Nokes, president and CEO of REDpoint International, told Dental Tribune during a telephone interview that the idea behind the device is to allow dental practices to provide specialized care for those who are handicapped.

"The Versatilt can help improve the working environment for care providers in their diligent treatment of the wheelchair-bound," he said.

What's more, Nokes said, patients who are treated while being reclined with the device, which accommodates most manual and motorized wheelchairs, find it comfortable. The patient can be reclined up to 65 degrees. It requires floor space of 36 by 60 inches, and it can be folded into an 18-inch deep space for storage.

The Versatilt received the Attendee's Choice Award for Best New Product at the National Ergonomics Conference and Exposition (NECE), held in 2009 in Las Vegas.

More information — including a video of the Versatilt in action — is available online, at www.versatilt.com.

Unique works celebrate the art of dentistry

Do you ever use a phrase like "the art of dentistry" or perhaps "the art of endodontics" or even "the art of dentistry" or perhaps "the art of smile design"? If you consider yourself an artist in addition to a dentist, you might want to check out some of the three-dimensional works available from Art 4 Your Practice.

The Walnut-Creek, Fla.-based supplier offers a wide array of unique shadowboxes, showcases, sculptures and paintings that are dedicated to the fine art of the dental practice. For example, a three-dimensional, glass-enclosed tooth is surrounded by scaffolding, with a miniature construction crew going to work. There are also jaws or entire smiles being worked on in a similar manner.

The works, which are handcrafted by artists in Europe, can be a great way to give your patients something to contemplate while waiting for their turn in your chair.

More information about the company is available online, at www.art4yourpractice.com.