

LEEDS EMBRACES TECHNOLOGY

Leeds Dental Institute is acquiring a state of the art, web-based Dental Picture Archiving and Communications (PACS) system from Infinitt UK Ltd. This will allow digital dental images to be acquired and viewed at the Institute's 150 dental chairs, from consultants' offices and other parts

of the Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust.

Infinitt will integrate the PACS system to enable the Institute's staff to use Leeds Teaching Hospital's existing HSS CRIS radiology for reporting of dental exams.

Fiona Carmichael, Consultant Dental and Maxillofacial Radiologist, said: 'Leeds Dental Institute can look to its future dental life with confidence'.

The system is scheduled to go live in April 2013.

CHIMPS SUCKLE REGARDLESS OF TOOTH ERUPTION

A study from Harvard has found that the emergence of the first permanent teeth in chimpanzees does not correlate with weaning age, as previously thought.¹

Smith *et al.* used high resolution photographs to monitor the eruption of first molars in juvenile chimpanzees in the Kanyawara chimpanzee community in Kibale National Park, Uganda. The chimpanzees were photographed whenever they opened their mouths, with the eruption of first molars observed at around three years of age.

While it was commonly thought that this change would lead to weaning in chimpanzees, the juveniles were seen to suckle as much, if not more, during the eruption of first molars, despite also showing adult-like feeding patterns and consuming solid foods. The chimps threw tantrums if their mothers tried to deny them time to nurse

and a conclusive link between first molar eruption and weaning age cannot be drawn. More research is needed to understand how feeding behaviours mature in the wild.

1. Smith T M, Machanda Z, Bernard A *et al.* First molar eruption and life history in living wild chimpanzees. *PNAS* 2013; doi: 10.1073/pnas.1218746110.



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GROWING BODIES LINKED TO GAMMY GUMS

A recent review¹ has linked obesity with an increased risk of periodontitis, adding to the list of health concerns connected to being grossly overweight.

Both diseases are associated with inflammatory processes: adipose tissues secrete chemical mediators of inflammation and gum disease similarly produces cytokines, inflammatory proteins. Research suggests that as obese bodies continually produce these chemicals, raising the level of inflammatory proteins in the body, obesity promotes the development of other inflammatory

diseases such as periodontitis. It is unclear whether increased cytokines in the bloodstream directly injure gum tissues or simply modify the response of the periodontal tissues to the oral environment. Progressive inflammation around infected tissues can cause gum to lose its attachment to teeth and result in bone loss. Further studies are therefore required to discern if there is a direct causal relationship between obesity and gum disease.

Dr Ronnie Levine OBE highlighted the growing challenge obesity poses to dentistry in a recent

HONOURS, AWARDS, APPOINTMENTS

NIHR Fellowship

Murtaza Siddiqui has been awarded a two-year NIHR In Practice Research Fellowship which will enable him to complete a MSc in Dental Public Health at UCL under the supervision of Professor Richard Watt. The Fellowship is designed to support GPs and GDPs who are interested in developing a future career in clinical research. Dr Siddiqui is the first dentist to receive the award in London/SE England.

Awards for research

All 32 UK medical schools have been awarded funds for innovative activities that aim to foster a research culture in all clinicians entering the NHS. The awards are made by the Academy of Medical Sciences as part of a £1 million, five year scheme called INSPIRE which is supported by the Wellcome Trust and aims to stimulate medical and dental undergraduates to pursue scientific research.

GDC appointments

The GDC is seeking to appoint a Chair and 11 Council members to take office in October 2013. Applicants need a strong commitment to patient protection and the promotion of confidence in the regulation of dental professionals. Expressions of interest can be made to gdccouncilappointments@gatenbysanderson.com.

BDJ article,² not just with regard to gum disease and clinical indications but with respect to the practical aspect of treating overweight individuals in the conventional primary care setting. Moreover, health conditions associated with obesity such as Type 2 diabetes can also negatively impact on oral health and are associated with periodontitis.

1. Krejci C B, Bissada N F. Obesity and periodontitis: a link. *Gen Dent* 2013; **61**: 60-63.
2. Levine R. Obesity and oral disease - a challenge for dentistry. *Br Dent J* 2012; **213**: 453-456.

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