

but even in small doses alcohol can be toxic to infants and should never be used.

#### Kissing a donkey to cure toothache

In German legend from the Middle Ages it was proposed that kissing a donkey would take away the pain of toothache. It can only be presumed that attempting this with a member of the horse family could lead to an act of aggression resultant in accidental exodontia, thus removing the painful tooth and source of toothache.

#### Gain a child, lose a tooth

The old wives' tale that women lose a tooth for every child they bear may be valid. Studies have shown that gingivitis and periodontitis can occur during pregnancy, which if severe and left untreated can lead to periodontal bone loss and subsequent tooth loss.

#### Eruption of wisdom teeth signifies halfway through lifespan

It was once believed that the eruption of third molars was a marker that one was halfway through their life. Considering the fact that third molars generally erupt in early adulthood at around the age of 20 and until the nineteenth century the average lifespan for Britons was 40 years, this indicator was not wholly inaccurate. However, in the UK today the average life expectancy is around 80, so there is no need to fear unduly when wisdom teeth start coming through.

#### Placing an aspirin on a tooth instead of swallowing it

Many people believe that placing an aspirin on a sore tooth is more effective than swallowing it. Aspirin, also known as acetylsalicylic acid, can in fact cause swelling of soft tissues such as gums in some patients and needs to be ingested to effectively enter the bloodstream and achieve analgesia.

It may be entertaining to start your own dental myths ... have you heard that chewing on the right side of your mouth increases creativity?

BY LAURA PACEY



#### IN THIS ISSUE

In this issue Dr David Radford argues that denture identification marking should be standard practice.

With an ageing population and increasing diagnosis of dementia there is a need for routine marking of dentures in general dental practice for certain groups of patients, as David stresses: 'The upset and loss of self-esteem for the patient who loses their denture is immeasurable. Often as dentists we tend to underplay the intimacy of a prosthesis, however, we all recognise the difficulty if it is misplaced or unidentified.'

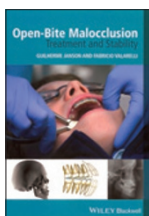
Denture identification marking is a simple procedure but potentially could improve the quality of life for the patient: 'For replacement dentures I would much prefer to adopt a copy denture procedure for an elderly, frail and possibly

confused patient in a nursing home rather than start from scratch.' The national audit established that the cost from the laboratory is a reasonable £5 per prosthesis, but David questions: 'Is the dentist going to go the extra mile and take a reduction of income from the 12 UDAs that is received for the total provision of care for that patient?'

The development of this opinion article came from David's involvement in dental education. Amrita Kalyan, who was a final year student on the Hygiene and Therapy programme at the University of Portsmouth Dental Academy, undertook a literature review and local audit of laboratory practice as part of her module on evidence-based dentistry. David said: 'Her enthusiasm for the subject was sparked by the outreach programme of the Academy in Alternative Clinical Environments with her visits to local nursing homes and recognising the problem of lost and muddled dentures. Her study was subsequently expanded to cover a wider national sample.' It is hoped this article persuades leaders and negotiators to consider funding for this cost effective procedure and encourages dentists and clinical dental technicians to revisit denture marking in their own practices.

**Did you know?** David collects British military collar badges and finds some of their craftsmanship akin to the finest prosthodontic technical work. He also has an allotment and grows everything from figs to black kale.

#### BOOK REVIEW



#### OPEN-BITE MALOCCLUSION: TREATMENT AND STABILITY

G. Janson, F. Valarelli  
Wiley Blackwell  
price £94.99; pp 476  
ISBN 9781118335987

This is the first edition of a comprehensive textbook written by Dr Guilherme Janson, Professor of Orthodontics at Bauru Dental School in Brazil, and Dr Fabricio Valarelli, Associate Professor of Orthodontics at Ingá Dental School, Brazil. The extensive research experience of both authors, focusing on open bite and Class II malocclusions, speaks volumes for the credibility and quality of this publication.

Following the first chapter, which is an outline of both genetic and environmental aetiological factors concerning open bite malocclusions, the remaining four chapters discuss treatment options in order of ascending difficulty, finishing with a chapter on surgical options. The distress caused to both patient and clinician by relapse along with the importance of considering the stability of any treatment plan, particularly in these challenging cases, is clearly acknowledged in this book with each chapter finishing with a section on the stability of the discussed treatment modalities.

The core two chapters of the book look at open bite treatment, first in the deciduous and mixed dentition and then the permanent dentition. Cases are beautifully illustrated with colour photos taking

the reader through each stage of treatment. In fact, practically every point made in this text is demonstrated with a reference, figure or illustration making even complex topics an easy read.

The entire book is heavily evidence based, with references both embedded in the text and listed as an aid for further reading at the end of each chapter. The references include not only the most up to date publications on relevant topics but also important landmark papers.

In conclusion, the comprehensiveness of this book, although impressive, targets it towards the experienced orthodontic trainee, specialist or consultant as opposed to students or general dental practitioners. Undergraduate curriculums tend to only touch upon open bite treatment in the deciduous or mixed dentition whereas treatment in the permanent dentition and surgical options are usually topics for the qualified, specialist clinician. For these practitioners, this textbook would be a valuable and enjoyable read.

J. MORRISON