

Other journals in brief

A selection of abstracts of clinically relevant papers from other journals.

The abstracts on this page have been chosen and edited by John R. Radford.

ARTICAINE V LIDOCAINE

A comparison of the efficacy of 4% articaine with 1:100,000 epinephrine and 2% lidocaine with 1:80,000 epinephrine in achieving pulpal anesthesia in maxillary teeth with irreversible pulpitis

Kanaa MD, Whitworth JM *et al.* *J Endod* 2012; **38**: 279–282

Pulpal analgesia was only achieved in three-quarters of patients, whether or not they received articaine or lidocaine.

Most studies have reported that articaine is more effective than lidocaine at achieving anaesthesia, particularly following mandibular infiltrations. Against this backdrop, the aim of this study was to compare the efficacy of buccal infiltrations of articaine with lidocaine in order to achieve anaesthesia of maxillary teeth with irreversible pulpitis. In this randomised double-blind clinical trial adopting CONSORT (www.consort-statement.org: to improve design, conduct, analysis and interpretation), there was no therapeutic difference between articaine and lidocaine. Regardless of anaesthetic agent, dental anaesthesia (absence of a response to an electronic pulp tester) was not always achieved. In addition, when pulpal analgesia was judged to be sufficient, some 15% still experienced pain at the start of treatment. The patients in this study presented in pain at an emergency dental clinic.

DOI: 10.1038/sj.bdj.2012.409

CRACKED TEETH

Analysis of factors associated with cracked teeth

Seo D-G, DDS, Yi Y-A *et al.* *J Endod* 2012; **38**: 288–292

In those patients who attended a dental hospital with 'unexplained biting pain' and were diagnosed with cracked teeth, most of these teeth had been restored but only one third had been root filled.

This study reports some factors associated with over one hundred cracked teeth, in patients who presented with symptoms in a secondary dental care setting. The following associations were made: 1) 72.0% of these cracked teeth were restored compared to 28.0% that were intact, 2) only one third of teeth had been root filled and 3) the maxillary molar was the most common tooth that was affected. This study reports only factors associated with cracked teeth in those patients who attended for an emergency appointment at a dental hospital. There is a distinction between these observations in this selected group of patients and predictive factors for a cracked tooth.

DOI: 10.1038/sj.bdj.2012.410

PATIENT SUPPORTING LEARNING

Can patients help teach professionalism and empathy to dental students? Adding patient videos to a lecture course

Schwartz B, Bohay R. *J Dent Educ* 2012; **76**: 174–184

During training, dental students lose empathy for patients.

The authors of this study, report that videos recorded of patients recounting experiences of dental treatment, appear to have a higher learning impact for second-year dental students compared with those in third-year. These patients were from predominantly disenfranchised backgrounds. This study also showed that students seem to lose their empathy for patients during their training. However, the use of videos combined with reflective learning may lessen this worrying observation although some students loathed this method of learning. The investigators acknowledge that this study has limitations in that only about one half of those students invited to participate reported their observations and there was no control group. Nevertheless, the authors argue that the use of videos are central to equality and equity in delivering dental care under the overarching umbrella of empathy.

DOI: 10.1038/sj.bdj.2012.411

'LEGITIMATE FORM OF DISCRIMINATION'

Does performance in selection processes predict performance as a dental student?

Rich AM, Ayers KMS *et al.* *Eur J Dent Educ* 2012; **16**: 27–34

Pre-selection psychometric testing does not predict accurately the performance of dental students in their final year.

The days are long gone when the pedigree of an applicant for a place at dental school was reflected by the school tie. In this study carried out in New Zealand, the investigators did not find associations between pre-admission tests (UMAT testing) exploring 1) logical reasoning, 2) emotional intelligence, and 3) general intelligence, and the achievement of dental students in their final year. Notwithstanding this, both academic scores and the 'structured interview', did not fare any better. There is some commonality between UMAT and UKCAT. The latter is used by some dental schools in the UK. It is argued there has been 'insufficient time to assess its [UKCAT's] ability to predict performance' and it has bias. This study does little to resolve the assertion of Michael J. Sandel that selecting university students is little more than legitimate discrimination.

DOI: 10.1038/sj.bdj.2012.412