

Conference Report

Fourteenth World Congress on Dental Traumatology Reykjavik, Iceland – May 5–7, 2005

Dentists from over 25 countries gathered in Reykjavik, Iceland, for the Fourteenth World Congress on Dental Traumatology. In a land of stark beauty, shaped by ongoing glacial and volcanic forces where the sun at times never sets or, absents itself entirely, where flora and fauna cling precariously and tenaciously to the challenging ecosystem, something quite wonderful emerged and flourished. Under the able and gracious direction of Congress Chair, Asgeir Sigurdsson, attendees participated in a stimulating, diverse and comprehensive scientific program, while being delighted with genuinely congenial social activities. Both the quality of the program and scheduled activities created a robust atmosphere for intellectual and interpersonal exchange.

Prior to the Congress, President Marie Terese Flores convened a meeting of the IADT Council to work on furthering the mission and goals of the organization while enhancing membership services.

The two and a half days of presentations focused on better understanding of the dynamics of dentoalveolar injuries with the overriding goal of preserving injured hard and soft tissues while restoring patients to the highest level of oral function and esthetics. Given the high quality of the presentations and the expertise of the many speakers, a summary runs the risk of overemphasis or inadvertent exclusion; nonetheless, the following endeavors to achieve a modicum of fairness, and overall flavor of the Congress.

Martin Trope's opening presentation on 'Clinical Management of the Avulsed Tooth – Minimizing Resorption Complications' was scientifically grounded and provocative, stimulating a lively dialog with attendees, and exploring strategies for managing this most vexing sequela of trauma. Of particular interest was the description of the potential role of corticosteroids in reducing inflammation.

Maria Teresa Flores' presentation on 'How Oral Trauma in Childhood Affects the Developing Dentition' emphasized the potentially serious consequences of deciduous tooth trauma to the permanent dentition and the need for comprehensive public health initiatives and thorough education of parents in such matters; a strong and heartfelt message.

Mitsuhiro Tsukiboshi highlighted the role of intentional replantation and autotransplantation of teeth where conventional methods of therapy have failed to save the traumatized tooth. Clinical techniques and long-term follow-up was documented with superb photography.

Jens Andreasen, reflecting a lifetime of expertise and continuous inquiry into the mechanisms of trauma and wound healing, masterfully reviewed the dynamics of pulpal and periodontal ligament healing and posited that new advances in treatment will come with better understanding of cellular and molecular phenomena. A fitting conclusion to the day.

Day 2 began with Andreas Filippi providing an excellent review of splinting techniques as well as research and clinical use of the Titanium-trauma-splint (TTS).

Lars Andersson, in addition to clearly describing the injuries to the soft and hard tissues and the principles involved in both their diagnosis and management, importantly emphasized the team approach of both general dentists and specialists combining their efforts to achieve maximal benefit for the trauma patient.

Tom Von Arx followed with a fine presentation exploring the role of implant therapy following dentoalveolar trauma, with great emphasis on preserving and augmenting alveolar ridge volume, so often compromised in younger patients when traumatic injuries are most likely to occur.

Cecelia Bourguignon concluded the morning's presentation with a look at the many ways by which endodontists can assume an active and important role in the management of traumatized teeth. In both a spirited and thoughtful manner, Dr Bourguignon advocated for engaging the knowledge and expertise of endodontists early in the trauma process.

The afternoon of day 2 began with presentations by the Canadian team of Ed Barrett and David Kenny. The first presentation based on a review of clinical outcome studies concluded that Emdogain's potential for regenerating a new PDL post avulsion injuries is unfounded; the case of a promising hypothesis negated by a simple fact.

Dave Kenny enlightened participants with his current research utilizing finite element modeling of blunt trauma to the maxilla to establish a scientific basis for designing oral protective devices tailored to specific sports.

The remainder of day 2, also expertly moderated by Leif Bakland, consisted of 10 short oral presentations covering a wide gamut of case presentations, clinical techniques and research into many aspects of diagnosis, treatment and complications of traumatic injuries. Additionally, participants were able to view a number of poster presentations throughout the meeting.

Day 3 ended the Congress as it began with exceptional presentations. Andre Ritter demystified the rapidly evolving world of adhesive and esthetic dentistry by focusing on the conservative, esthetic and biologic restoration of fractured anterior teeth. His presentation was noteworthy for its clarity and concise enumeration of principles essential for successful restoration of both function and esthetics.

Van Haywood, likewise, stripped away the hype that oftentimes accompanies bleaching, and demonstrated the extraordinary successes available through ordinary applications. Dr Haywood reviewed tray design, bleaching of the single discolored tooth, options available for the endodontically treated tooth and the importance of the 'tincture of time' in achieving success.

Through a combination of computer technology, tireless effort and sheer wizardry, Dr Andreasen summarized the salient points of the many speakers and urged us all to embrace the next frontier of research in traumatology which must arise from stem cell studies and controlling inflammatory mediators at the molecular level.

By any measure, a fitting conclusion to a fine meeting.

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