

# Trauma in a global health perspective

## EDITORIAL

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Trauma kills more than 3 million people in the world every year and millions of people are injured. Although the oral region comprises 1% of the total body area, the oral injuries account for as much as 5% of all body injuries with an even higher proportion of oral injuries among children. Teeth are injured in more than nine of ten patients presenting with oral injuries.

In developed countries, physicians and dentists are always available and outside office hours they manage emergency treatment. Many patients in developed countries leave the dental office already a few hours after the trauma with a fractured tooth already restored and being able to function and smile normally again. Advanced implant treatment for replacement of lost teeth and bone can be carried out nowadays and aesthetics can be fully restored to normality due to advanced techniques currently available in dentistry.

However we must not forget that in a world perspective most of the dental injuries are left untreated because

resources are not at all available or too expensive for the individuals. Nearly 2.5 billion people live on less than \$2 a day with hunger as a constant companion. The vast majority of the poor in the developing countries also lack access to the most basic health resources. For these individuals it is not a question of being able to restore aesthetically pleasing smiles. For them it is more important to have access to basic resources such as a dentist equipped with local anaesthesia, who can extract the fractured tooth so pain can be eliminated and basic functions such as eating can be re-established.

Let us all try to find ways to make a difference for trauma victims also beyond our own present horizons. The first step in that direction is empathy.

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