

National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research

The National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, MD, directs 27 different institutes and centres and is considered the nation's medical research agency. It is a branch of the Department of Health and Human Services. One of the prominent institutes that are housed under the NIH is the National Institute for Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) which was established in 1948. Until 1998, it was known as the National Institute of Dental Research. The NIDCR maintains a website at <http://www.nidcr.nih.gov>.

The mission of the NIDCR is to 'improve oral, dental and craniofacial health through research, research training and dissemination of health information' as is stated on the website. The means of accomplishing this mission is through assisting, funding, conducting and promoting research and providing the knowledge to policy makers, professionals, researchers and the public.

The website has an A-Z index and is also available in Spanish. In addition, it is an RSS document enabling it to be viewed or disseminated in a variety of formats. You can also apply to be a recipient of its newsletter. The text size can also be selected for ease of reading.

The left side of the newsletter is devoted to News and Features. This provides the latest findings and topics that are at the forefront of dental research. The right-hand side of the newsletter houses several clickable references including: (1) *Finding Dental Care* – aids in identifying resources for the public to seek dental care options; (2) *Data and Statistics* – provides a collection of data and trends in the USA on oral conditions as well as population-based dental health. This section also provides links to the Surgeon General's Report on Oral Health and Health People 2010 Oral Health Chapter; (3) *Educational Resources* – provides resources for the general public, teachers, professionals and students on oral health; and

(4) *About Us* – gives vital information about the structure, purpose, budget and staff of the NIDCR.

The top of the website home page is divided into several sections. These include *Oral Health*, *Clinical Trials*, *Research*, *Grant and Funding* and *Careers and Training*. The section on *Oral Health* provides information on diseases, conditions, prevention and treatment relating to the oral cavity. It also provides links for brochures and publications. The *Clinical Trials* section gives current information on clinical studies and how you can participate. It also provides listing of clinical trials that are currently seeking patients. The section on *Research* describes the institute's priorities in research and provides current research findings. It also provides links to the Division of Extramural Research and NIDCR Laboratories. There are also links to 'Tools for Researchers'. The *Grants and Funding* section supplies information on research funding opportunities as well as who to contact. The section also gives information on the grant application process. The last section, *Careers and Training*, provides information on careers in dentistry, training, internships and fellowships in research.

This website has a variety of information for researchers, dental professionals, students, educators and the general public. It is easy to navigate and understand. This site can be of benefit to anyone interested in dental research whether it be searching the results and resources or pursuing a career.

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