

On Parafunctional Considerations in Implant Therapy

Nonfunctional or parafunctional habits involve repeated or sustained occlusal contacts that can be harmful to the natural dentition or its replacement components. The profession lacks compelling epidemiologic studies of the incidence of parafunctional occlusal stress in populations with both natural and artificial dentitions. Nevertheless, clinical experience suggests that parafunctional teeth contacts of diverse frequencies, magnitudes, and durations are indeed common; and that these activities in patients who wear prostheses may elicit adverse, time-dependent changes in hard and soft tissues as well as in their prosthetic replacements.

Dentists frequently respond to what is presumed to indicate a history, or actual evidence, of parafunctional activity with explanatory counsel and routine prescription of an occlusal splint. The popularity of implant therapy appears to have now heightened an emergent conviction that occlusal splint therapy should be a routine consideration for patients with implant-supported prostheses. Yet the efficacy and effectiveness of the approach remains controversial

and is unsupported by a rigorous synthesis of defined and transparent procedures to identify, assess, and summarize available research on the topic. A robust combination of results from several published studies would inform optimal treatment planning and expected outcomes with a minimization of bias for “suspect” bruxers undergoing any form of prosthodontic treatment.

In this issue, a team of authors from the Federal University of Pelotas, Brazil, attempt to answer the question: “Should occlusal splints be a routine prescription for diagnosed bruxers undergoing implant therapy?” After screening several databases, the authors failed to locate clinical trials that matched their selected inclusion criteria. Their synthesis of the available literature acknowledges this gap in our collective knowledge base and should provoke healthy debate and, hopefully, further investigation among our international leadership.

George A Zarb
Editor-in-Chief

The next **IJP/Karlsruhe Workshop for Young Prosthodontic Educators (YPE)** will take place on October 12–15, 2014, in Baden-Baden, Germany. It will be funded by the Foundation for Rehabilitation (FOR) which is an independent, international initiative that seeks to improve oral health care and support humanitarian leadership.

These unique workshops are presented by a faculty selected from the IJP editorial team whose pro bono commitment helps develop and nurture clinical scholarship. The 2014 Workshop is open to new participants as well as a small number of past workshop attendees. Attendance and free registration are limited to 36 participants who are preferably already ICP members.

Participation Criteria

- Candidates should be at a relatively “early career” stage of their teaching commitment and currently contracted to a part-, or full-time university teaching position in the discipline.
- Candidates are requested to submit an application, a brief current/recent CV, and a one-page essay on how workshop participation could impact their scholarly development. Each application should also be endorsed by the applicant’s department/discipline head or faculty dean.
- Applications should be emailed to the IJP office (ijp.prostho@utoronto.ca) with copies also emailed to the ICP Administration office (icp@icp-org.com) to confirm ICP membership status.

The ICP provides limited workshop support through competitive funding to assist attendance for participants from developing countries. Potential participants should provide confidential information about their funding limitations, confirmed by their Head of Department/Program Director and submit their funding request to the ICP office in their application.

Registration Deadline Date: June 1, 2014

Contact Information:

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