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No-drill restorations and amalgam equally successful

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DTT

Dubai/Veileipzig, Germany:
A method used in developing countries to restore dental cavities may be a viable alternative for conventional tooth restorations, scientists from Johannesburg in South Africa are reporting. In a systematic review involving clinical studies in China and the Middle East, they found that survival rates of restorations using Atraumatic Restorative Treatment (ART) are comparable, and to some extent superior, to those placed with amalgam.

Developed in Africa in the mid-80s, ART is a clinical procedure based on removing carious enamel and dentine using hand instruments only and restoring the tooth with an adhesive filling material such as glass ionomer. It is claimed to be painless and require minimal cavity preparation while conserving sound tooth tissue.

The World Health Organization (WHO) currently recommends ART for application in regions with limited resources, as well as for elderly patients and those with special needs in industrialised countries.

In the new review, researchers from the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg compared 27 datasets of ART restorations with amalgam fillings in Class I, II and V cavities of primary and permanent teeth from clinics in Kuwait, Syria and China. Most of them found no difference in the success rates of ART and amalgam restorations, according to the report. Moreover, four comparisons found better results using ART.

“Our review offers the best evidence in this clinical issue,” says Dr. S. Mikkenaustsch from the University of the Witwatersrand and author of the review. “By making use of a systematic literature and reference check in five major databases, we were able to identify all randomised control studies that have been conducted worldwide.”

According to WHO figures, caries prevalence in most developing countries is still high despite preventative measures such as water fluoridation and improved school-based dental education.

Masato Mugitani
to chair health workers’ alliance

The Japanese Assistant Minister for Global Health, Dr Masato Mugitani, has been appointed Chair-Elect of the Global Health Workforce Alliance at the Second Global Forum on Human Resources for Health in Bangkok in Thailand. He succeeds incumbent Dr Sigrun Møgedal, former State Secretary of Foreign Affairs and HIV/AIDS ambassador of Norway.

Established by the World Health Organization in 2006, the Global Health Workforce Alliance is an international platform to address shortages in the health care workforce worldwide. It comprises members of governments, the World Bank and several non-governmental organisations.

According to figures from the Alliance, there is a worldwide deficit of 4.2 million in health and dental care workers, with 1.5 million needed in Africa alone.

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Singapore actor Nick Sheng
A talk about teeth

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