Anxiety provoking scale developed

By DTI

HONG KONG: Dental anxiety is a major hindrance in the provision of dental care. Although it is known that fear of the dentist is closely related to patients’ past experiences in the dental setting, only limited scientific research on the actual causes of dental anxiety is available. Now, researchers have developed a Dental Anxiety Provoking Scale (DAPS) that measures the degree to which anxiety is triggered by certain dental stimuli.

For the study, the participants, 460 male and female students recruited from two universities in Hong Kong, answered a questionnaire including a 73-item measure of dental anxiety-provoking stimuli. The factor analysis established seven factors for the DAPS, namely, dental check-up, injection, scale and drill, surgery, empathy, perceived lack of control, and clinical environment.

In a sub-group of 160 participants, injections and surgical treatment, in particular, were identified as anxiety-provoking events. Although it was not statistically significant, female respondents showed relatively higher anxiety regarding injection, surgery, and scale and drill, while male respondents showed relatively higher anxiety regarding perceived lack of control, empathy, and dental check-ups.

In addition, the researchers found that perceived dentist behaviour had an impact on the expression and development of dental fear, indicating that the dentist–patient relationship is strongly related to patients’ feelings of safety and control during treatment.

The researchers concluded that their DAPS covers a broad spectrum of patients’ individual dental anxiety-related anxiety and may also function as a further assessment to supplement initial screening. This may allow the identification of patients with higher dental fear so that the causes of their dental fear can then be addressed.

The study, titled ‘Development of a Dental Anxiety Provoking Scale: A pilot study in Hong Kong’, was published in the September issue of the Journal of Dental Sciences.

Extractions cost Australia millions

A new study conducted at the University of Western Australia has shown that prophylactic removal of third molars costs the Australian health system more than half a billion Australian dollar a year. In addition, the researchers found that between A$420 and A$513 million (US$309 and 377 million) could be saved annually if Australia adopted guidelines comparable to the UK.

The study, funded by the Department of Health and Aging, has shown that third molars are the most common cause of dental surgery and account for 45% of all dental surgery in Australia. The study also found that the removal of third molars costs on average A$166 (US$129,110) for each person, with a median annual salary of A$146,340, the fifth best paid job with a median annual salary of US$129,110.

Job prospects

Dentist and orthodontist are among the top ten highest paying jobs in the US, the 2015 Jobs Rated report by CareerCast has revealed. The profession of dentist was rated the fifth best paid job with a median annual salary of US$146,340, followed by orthodontist at No. 7 with a median annual salary of US$129,110.

Caries inhibition

A new method that uses specifically formulated, non-staining silver particles to arrest caries and render teeth more resistant to decay has been developed by researchers at the University of Otago in Australia. The technology could help preserve caries-infected teeth and prolong the life of dental fillings in the future.

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Mega-Merger

DENTSPLY International and Sirona Dental Systems have entered into a definitive merger agreement and will operate under the name of DENTSPLY SIRONA in the future. Both companies will retain their respective headquarters. The current DENTSPLY head office in York will serve as the new company’s global headquarters, while the international headquarters will be located in Salzburg.

Upon close of the transaction, Jeffrey T. Sloan, current president and CEO of Sirona, will serve as CEO of DENTSPLY SIRONA and will be a member of the board of directors. Bret W. Wise, current chairman and CEO of DENTSPLY, will assume the position of executive chairman of the newly founded company. In their respective positions, they will collaborate in executing the corporate strategy and in integrating the companies and their respective corporate cultures.

Together, the companies expect to generate a net revenue of about US$4.8 billion ($4.54 billion) and adjusted EBITDA of more than US$900 million ($760 million), excluding the incremental benefits of synergies.