HOMEOPATHY AND DENTISTRY KEEP YOU SMILING

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- One may wonder what homeopathic medicine may offer dentistry.
- It initially seems that dental disease is a straightforward problem that simply requires good hygiene for prevention and the use of modern dental practices to deal with dental problems as they arise.
- Although there may be general agreement on the importance of prevention,
- there is disagreement on how to prevent dental problems, and there is significant controversy on how to deal with them when they arise.

- It is generally recognized that tooth decay (caries) results from bacteria in the mouth which thrive on the sugar and refined foods that the person eats.
- The bacteria produces a harmful acid which can dissolve teeth.
- When the teeth are not kept clean through brushing and flossing, the germs are able to infiltrate through the enamel and into the dentine of the teeth or under the gums of the mouth, by causing decay and peridontal disease.

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- When the bacteria isn't cleaned out of the mouth, it binds with corrosive waste products in the mouth and attaches itself to teeth and gums, forming plaque.
- Plaque destroys the connective tissues that attach gums to teeth, creating inflammation of the gums or gingivitis.
- If this disease process continues, the teeth will loosen and eventually either fall out or need to be removed.

- It is recognized that the salivary glands in the mouth help fight decay by trying to neutralize the acid that the germs produce.
- The healthy functioning of the salivary glands are dependent on the person's overall health.
- Hormones, in particular, play a major role in the health of gums.
- If a person's thyroid is either secreting too much or too little thyroid hormones, the ligaments that hold teeth and gums together are weakened and the blood supply to gum tissues is decreased.

- Imbalance in sex hormones can make a person more susceptible to gum and teeth problems, which is why women experience exacerbated dental conditions during puberty, menstruation, pregnancy, and menopause.
- Anemia which can lessen the amount of blood oxygen reaching the gums can also make a person more susceptible to gum disease.
- Even something as general as stress can influence the strength of the connective tissues between teeth and gums.

- The person's overall health also influences the strength of the person's teeth. The parathyroid regulates calcium levels in the body, and an irregularity in this gland can create various dental problems.
- A person's overall health is affected by proper nutrition, and dental health is certainly influenced by it too.
- In particular, dentists have found that appropriate amounts of calcium and fluoride are important for dental health. There is however a major controversy on how much fluoride is necessary and how people should get it.

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Homeopathic Insights on the Controversy of Fluoridation

- The American Dental Association asserts that water fluoridation decreases dental caries by 50-70%.
- The homeopathic point of view on fluoride is that it may be helpful in preventing caries and it may cause various other dental and health problems.
- The basic homeopathic principle is that a substance in micro dose will help cure those similar symptoms that it will cause in larger dose.
- Fluoride is an effective medicine in preventing caries, but it can also mottle (turn chalky white or yellow) teeth and cause various other symptoms.

- A 1982 article in Science noted that the 1 part per million of fluoride which is commonly added to water may be too much after all.
- Fluoride, as an enzyme poison, help to reduce the formation of bacterial acid in the mouth that corrodes teeth.
- However, even in the same dose, fluoride may create various symptoms because of its side effects on bodily enzymes which are beneficial for health.

- Dental caries declined for people in unfluoridated cities.
- According to the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, fluoride is not considered an essential nutrient.
- Whereas the American Dental Association asserts that fluoridation assures that people will get amounts of fluoride that will prevent caries, anti-fluoridationists rebut that we are already getting enough, perhaps even too much.
- The anti-fluoridationists have expressed concern that additional fluoride in the diet will cause a wide variety of serious health problems.

- It has been estimated that dried cereals, ready-to-drink fruit juices, infant formula, and strained baby food processed with fluoridated water contain up to 20 times as much fluoride as products made with unfluoridated water.

-) Research has also shown that levels of one-half to one part per million of fluoride causes increased tumor growth in mice by 15-25%. Based on this research, one might expect that those who live in cities with fluoridated water may have a higher cancer rate than those who live in unfluoridated cities. Dr. Yiamouyiannis in conjunction with former chief chemist with the U.S. National Cancer Institute (14) Dr. Dean Burk did this comparison and found that people living in fluoridated cities did, in fact, have higher cancer death rates than those in other cities in surrounding geographical areas. (15) However, a careful analysis of these statistics which was published in the New England Journal of Medicine noted that this study was not age-adjusted research.* This critique of the Yiamouyiannis and Burk study indicates that there is no proven link between fluoridation and cancer.

Although there may not be definate evidence that fluoridation may lead to cancer, many clinicians have found that it can cause diarrhea, muscular pains, excessive thirst and urination, episodes of acute abdominal pain, skin rashes, and progressive exhaustion.

- In addition to the potential problems that fluoride in water may cause, new research published in the highly respected scientific journal Nature has found that using fluorided water in aluminum pots tends to leech more aluminum into the food or water.
- Since ingestion of aluminum has been linked to Alzheimer's disease, it may be prudent to avoid aluminum cookware, especially if one uses fluoridated water

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- Whereas homeopathic organizations do not have a formal position on fluoridation, there is general acknowledgement in the homeopathic community that certain individuals in populations will be hypersensitive to fluoride.
- Although the American Dental Association (ADA) acknowledges this hypersensitivity in a very small number of Americans, homeopaths generally assume that there are greater numbers than those assumed by the A.D.A. There is also concern among homeopaths about what long-term exposure to small doses of fluoride may cause.

- There is further concern among some homeopaths that fluoridation amounts to forced medication.
- Even those who get bottled water will receive additional fluoride as the result of increased fluoride in the food chain from watering fruits and vegetables, from washing fruits or vegetables in tap water, and from feeding fluoridated water to animals who will be consumed.

- **Amalgam Fillings: The Controversy**
- In 1840 the American Society of Dental Surgeons (ASDS) was formed, and it was America's first licensing body. This organization required that its members sign an oath affirming that they would not use mercury-containing materials in their dental fillings.
- The ADSD eventually died a couple of decades later and its rival organization, the American Dental Association, advocated for amalgam fillings. Throughout the ADA's history, some dentists have questioned the safety of these fillings.

Amalgam fillings are primarily composed of mercury, silver, tin, and copper.

The anti-amalgam dentists assert that the oral cavity is the only place in the human body where we commonly place non-biological materials

These dentists also note that the upper teeth are less than 10 centimeters to the brain and that high concentrations of mercury found post-mortem in the brain have been correlated to the numbers and surfaces of the amalgam fillings.

They express further concern that we have never adequately tested the bio-compatibility of these metals.

It is ironic, they note, that public health officials require that dentists keep their mercury in an airtight container and that they do not throw their excess mercury away in the trash, but must dispose of it in a carefully determined fashion.

And yet, dentists readily place this toxic substance in people's mouths. In fact, over 85% of the American public have amalgam fillings in their mouth.

"How can the mercury get loose?

- Corrosion is the culprit.
- While a hunk of metal in your tooth looks impervious, it may be subject to corrosion.
- In addition to the chemical environment of your mouth, which includes a constant saliva bath which tends to dissolve tin, amalgam in contact with other metals (such as a good bridge) creates a minature electrochemical cell which is hellbent on dissolving itself out of existence, freeing mercury in the process."

- Until very recently, the ADA has rebutted the anti-amalgam dentists noting that there is no evidence that the amalgams release any mercury or other metals into the body. New technology however has been able to detect this leeching.
- Studies have shown that people with amalgam fillings have detectable levels of mercury vapors in their breath.
- The ADA responded to this research by stating that mercury vapors in the mouth did not prove the presence of increased mercury in the blood

- Newer studies however have shown that blood mercury concentration in patients with amalgam filling were signficantly higher than those without such fillings.
- some research has shown that people with amalgam fillings had a significant decrease in T-cells* after insertion of fillings than before their insertion or after their removal.

? the leeching causes any medical problems, except in a very small number of people allergic to the amalgam.

- Acupuncturists note that the metalic fillings have the potential of acting as batteries and capacitors which can generate current and store electrical charges.
- Since every tooth is situated on an acupuncture meridian, the filling may provide additional stress which may create acute and/or chronic symptoms in susceptible individuals.

- The fact that acupuncture points reside under the teeth may be one possible explanation that homeopaths sometimes observe that the action of homeopathic medicines are antidoted by some dental work, including getting teeth cleaned or getting new fillings.
- It has been conjectured that some dental work stimulates so many acupuncture points in a short period of time **that it may "short circuit" the action of the homeopathic medicines**.
- More research on this phenomena would certainly be worthwhile.

- Although most homeopaths are unfamiliar with the controversies surrounding amalgam fillings, there have always been certain ones who have noted the health effects of these fillings.
- As far back as the late 1800s, **Dr. Charles Taft**, professor of dental surgery at a homeopathic medical college in Chicago, claimed that **amalgam fillings were responsible for the fact that some patients with chronic disease were not responding to homeopathic medicines.**
- Once these fillings were removed, he found that the medicines worked, and the person's chronic condition disappeared or was significantly reduced.

- As with fluoridation, homeopaths find that some people are more sensitive to certain metals.
- Since dentists generally recognize this fact also, **the most practical way to deal with it is for dentists to test the bio-compatibility of various types of fillings before placing them in a person's mouth.**
- Certain recognized immunological tests can be used, though they are expensive.
- Some dentists have found that new electroacupuncture machines are able to assess subtle but measurable changes in the meridian energy which acupuncturists feel can determine hypersensitivity.
- Although this new technology may hold promise, its accuracy is presently undetermined.

- Homeopaths are also concerned about the inevitable long-term exposure to metals in the fillings.
- Some **homeopaths have found that potentized doses of Mercury has helped some people,** but most homeopaths recognize the importance of strict individualization of the person in order to provide help to people suffering from their fillings.
- Homeopaths also have observed, as did homeopathic dentist Taft, **that fillings sometimes have to be removed before improvement** in health is possible.

Homeopathic Medicines for Dental Problems

- *"For there was never yet a philosopher that could endure the toothache patiently."*
- *--Much Ado About Nothing, Act V, Scene I, William Shakespeare*
- Besides offering a different perspective on fluoridation and amalgam fillings, **homeopathy also offers specific medicines that can be invaluable in reducing dental pain and alleviating dental disease.**
- It should first be mentioned **that homeopathic medicines do not replace good dental care but complement it.**
- Also, the medicines may be effective in relieving dental pain, but it is **often necessary to discover what the source of the pain is in order to cure the underlying problem.**
- If pain is occurring due to an abscess, it is not enough simply to reduce the pain. The abscess must be treated.

- Aconite (monkshood) is a common medicine given to patients, usually children, for their fear of dentists. These people become furious, restless and angry (children tend to stamp their feet and kick), and tend to express extreme sensitivity to touch.
- Gelsemium (yellow jasmine) is indicated in those people feeling of weakness (especially a weak feeling in the stomach), drowsiness, loss of memory, and diarrhea. Those who need Gelsemium tend to be hypokinetic, whereas
- those who need Argenicum nitricum (silver nitrate) tend to be hyperkinetic.

Argenticum nitricum is useful for patients who experience tremor and trembling of the whole body, who tend to be particularly talkative and hurried in their actions, and who have an inner nervousness which affects the bladder and intestines.

- If it **is the result of a dental abscess,**
- **the common medicines are**
- **Belladonna(deadly nightshade),**
- **Mercurius (mercury),**
- **Hepar sulph (Hahnemann's calcium sulphur), and**
- **Silicea(silica).**
- Belladonna is indicated at the initial formative stages where there isn't much swelling, though there is much throbbing and redness.

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- Mercurius is helpful when the person is salivating excessively, has foul breath, and experiences a pulsating pain which tends to be worse at night or from exposure to anything extremely hot or cold.
- Hepar sulph is valuable in the later stages of abscess when pus has formed. The tooth affected is hypersensitive to touch and to cold, and the gums bleed easily. Homeopaths have reported that this medicine helps drain pus from the abscess.
- Silicea is indicated after the pus has discharged; at this stage it hastens the resolution of the abscess

- Although these medicines may be helpful in alleviating the pain and in some instances in curing, **it is often necessary for the abscess to be drained and either a root canal established or the tooth removed.**
- **For pain and inflammation around wisdom teeth,** homeopaths and dentists have found that
- **Belladonna** is often given for throbbing pains and
- **Hepar sulph** to promote expulsion of pus.

- **Mercurius** is helpful in treating the pulsating pains that extend to the ears, especially at night,increased salivation. Locally, mouthwashes with tincture of Salvia (sage) are sometimes helpful.
- Neuralgic toothaches often yield to **Chamomilla** .

-People who need Chamomilla tend to be particularly sensitive to warm food and drink (especially coffee), and their symptoms are worse at night.

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- For those who are so frantic with pain that they cannot sleep, whose **pains are also relieved by holding cold water or ice in the mouth, and who are not relieved by Chamomilla, Coffea is indicated.**
- **Plantago (p**lantain)-when there is a toothache with radiating pains to the ears. Accompanying these pains generally are salivation, facial neuralgia, and headache.
- Other medicines that homeopaths consider **when dental pain extends to the ears are Mercurius and Sulphur,** the prescription of which is determined by the totality of the person's symptoms (these medicines however are never given in tincture).

- **Hypericum** (St. John's wort--the herb) is the prominent medicine given to people for neuralgic pains after tooth extractions.
- Recent study showed that when **Hypericum was given in alternation with Arnica** to people after tooth extraction, they experienced significantly less dental pain as compared to those given a placebo.

- Dr. George Baldwin, an Oakland, California dentist, Dr. Philip Parsons, a Keystone Heights, Florida dentist, and Dr. Richard Fischer, an Annandale, Virginia dentist, have **allreported impressive results using Ruta (rue)** for people who have pain after dental surgery.
- that Ruta would be useful for traumas or injuries to them.

- Homeopaths have also reported **success in treating hemorrhage after extraction, surgery, or accidental dental trauma.**
- Some homeopaths give **Arnica to prevent hemorrhage** or give it in the very initial stages of bleeding.
- **If bleeding persists and is bright red, Phosphorus;**
- instances when Phosphorus doesn't act rapidly, **Ipecacuanha** is often indicated.
- **Lachesis** is valuable if the blood is dark. And if a person commonly has bleeding problems, it is recommended they receive constitutional homeopathic care.

- **If a puncture wound in the gum** is incurred from surgery is causing pain, **Ledum** can relieve the pain and help it heal.
- If infection has already set in, Pyrogen is indicated.
- Calendula in its tincture form is also helpful in conjunction with either of these medicines.

- The tincture of Calendula
- useful in speeding the healing of punctures
- healing trauma from injuries to the oral cavity.
- It is of use for kids -irritate their gums or mouth and for the elderly whose dentures do not fit well
- Burns from ingesting extremely hot food or drinks or from aspirin burns are alleviated by Calendula tincture as well.

- A "dry socket" is the source of many people's dental pain. This condition occurs after an extraction when the blood doesn't clot well, and the bone and its nerve endings are exposed.
- Mouthwashes of Salvia(sage) infusions several times a day diminish some of the pain.
- Other medicines for this pain are:**Belladonna** for redness around the gums and throbbing pains that come and go rapidly;
- **Coffea** for unbearableble pains that cause the person to be very restless and that are temporarily relieved by cold water or ice in the mouth; .

- **Hepar sulph** for pain that is hypersensitive to touch and to cold; and
- **Silicea** to help in the final stages when clot around the tooth ultimately needs to be detached.
- If none of the above medicines seems indicated or is working, Ruta should be given

- A dental problem which has only recently become widely recognized is **temporomandibular joint (TMJ) syndrome**.
- It has been estimated that 38% of all impulses that go to the brain pass near this joint area.
- Malalignment of this jaw has been found to lead to symptoms as diverse as headache, vertigo, ringing in the ears, sinus pains, hearing loss, depression, and tic doulourex.

- Because of the diversity of symptoms that TMJ sufferers experience, there are many medicines which homeopaths consider in determining proper treatment.
- As with any other chronic malady, the homeopathic approach requires an assessment of the person's totality of symptoms. Care from a professional homeopath is clearly indicated in such cases.

- Besides treating acute dental problems, homeopathic medicines have the capacity to treat various chronic dental problems as well.
- Since some chronic dental conditions result from general health problems of the person, homeopathic medicines which have the capacity to strengthen a person's overall health therefore can augment general dental hygiene in order to prevent and treat teeth and gum disease

- The proper functioning of the salivary glands enables the body to digest foods and to neutralize the acids that germs in the mouth produce. Healthy functioning of the endocrine system helps the ligaments that hold teeth to gums remain b and aids the transport of blood to gums. The parathyroid gland is instrumental in helping to regulate calcium levels in the body. Because overall functioning of the body play an integral role in dental health, homeopathy will inevitably be recognized as a necessary part of general health care as well as good dental health.

- It is certainly encouraging that more and more dentists are utilizing homeopathic medicines. For those whose dentists have not yet made the transition to homeopathy, lay people can learn to use the medicines themselves with impressive success. In order to obtain the best results, it is recommended to obtain several books (not just books on homeopathy and dentistry, but also some of the materia medicas in order to learn more about the medicines--See the resources section at the end of this book for details on accessing books). And, when possible, it is highly recommended to attend seminars on homeopathic dentistry.
- Homeopathy can help keep you smiling!

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