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Transmission of Blood-borne Pathogens in US Dental Health Care Settings

Background: During the past decade, investigators have reported transmissions of blood-borne pathogens (BBPs) in dental settings. In this article, the authors describe these transmissions and examine the lapses in infection prevention on the basis of available information.

Methods: The authors reviewed the literature from 2003 through 2015 to identify reports of the transmission of BBPs in dental settings and related lapses in infection prevention efforts, as well as to identify reports of known or suspected health care-associated BBP infections submitted by state health departments to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Results: The authors identified 3 published reports whose investigators described the transmission of hepatitis B virus and hepatitis C virus. In 2 of these reports, the investigators described single-transmission events (from 1 patient to another) in outpatient oral surgery practices. The authors of the third report described the possible transmission of hepatitis B virus to 3 patients and 2 dental health care personnel in a large temporary dental clinic. The authors identified lapses in infection prevention practices that occurred during 2 of the investigations; however, the investigators were not always able to link a specific lapse to a transmission event. Examples of lapses included the failure to heat-sterilize hand pieces between patients, a lack of training for volunteers on

BBPs and the use of a combination of unsafe infection practices.

Conclusions: The authors found that reports describing the transmission of BBPs in dental settings since 2003 were rare. Failure to adhere to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommendations for infection control in dental settings likely led to disease transmission in these cases.

Practical Implications: The existence of these reports emphasizes the need to improve dental health care personnel's understanding of the basic principles and implementation of standard precautions through the use of checklists, policies, and practices.

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DENTAL FUN FACT

DID YOU KNOW...

PEOPLE WHO DRINK 3 OR MORE SUGARY SODAS DAILY HAVE 62% MORE DENTAL DECAY.

(<http://www.obteam.com/Fun-Facts.aspx>)

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Pre-Emptive Analgesia

This is an elegant study from 20 years ago showed the use of bupivacaine during the extraction of third molars under general anesthesia reduced postoperative pain as well as significantly decreased the use of opioid pain relievers. The authors showed the rise of plasma B-endorphin levels during surgery was blocked with the use of the local anesthetic as compared with the placebo group.

**By Stuart Lieblich, DMD
Section Editor, Anesthesia/Facial pain**

Gordon SM, Dionne RA, Brahim J, et al: Blockade of peripheral neuronal barrage reduces postoperative pain. Pain 70;209, 1997. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/s0304-3959\(96\)03315-5](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/s0304-3959(96)03315-5)

Dr. Brian Simpson
announces the thirty second meeting of the
NANUET IMPLANT STUDY GROUP

Speaker: Oliver Kurucz, MD
Head of Rheumatology at Nyack Hospital
Attending Physician Touro Medical College

**“Sjogren’s Syndrome: The Clinical Manifestations,
Diagnosis, and Treatments”**

Tuesday, November 7, 2017
Dinner: 6:30 Presentation: 7:00 — 9:00 pm

Hudson House 134 Main Street Nyack, NY

2 CE credits awarded by the Ninth District Dental Association
Cost: \$50.00

To register, please call: 845-623-3497
or email office@drbriansimpson.com

“The doctor that treats himself has a fool for a patient”.
-Sir William Osler