

Focus Day 2009 – Occlusal physiology and functional disorders



The theme of Mun-H-Center's yearly Focus Day was modern occlusal physiological treatment of pain and general functional disorders in the stomatognathic system. Nearly 100 people turned out to take part in the day's exciting program. Senior Dentist Birgitta Johansson-Cahlin, Focus Day's moderator, opened the day by warmly welcoming the participants.

The first lecture of the day was given by Professor Emeritus Gunnar E. Carlsson who spoke on Modern occlusal physiology – from bite to soul. TMD (Temporomandibular disorder) was previously diagnosed as pain in the temporomandibular joint, jaw sounds and diminished or impaired jaw function, whereas today one talks about comorbid conditions, e.g., orofacial pain, headache, neck problems, impaired general health, fibromyalgia and even eating disorders. TMD occurs more often in women. Dental guards are still the first course of treatment and are considered to be effective.

The next speaker was Associate Professor Malin Ernberg who spoke on the topic Muscle pain in the facial area. Pain is defined as an unpleasant sensory and/or emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage. Pain may be "allodynic", i.e. pain due to a stimulus which does not normally provoke pain, such as "hyperalgesia", a reduced pain threshold leading to an extreme pain reaction to touch. Orofacial pain may be local, e.g., myofascial pain, myositis or myospastic. The pain may also be generalised, such as in rheumatoid arthritis, fibromyalgia and polymyalgia rheumatica. These conditions are treated by attempting to reduce the patient's pain and to improve occlusion and articulation in the stomatognathic system.

After a good lunch and wonderful walk around the beautiful "Little Amund Island" Associate Professor Christopher Lindberg took over and spoke about Oral motor dysfunction in neurological conditions. Oral motor dysfunction may be caused by paralysis and involuntary motor activity in the region of the face. Neurological functional disorders include paralyses, numbness, visual/ olfactory/hearing impairments and motor coordination disorders. Christopher talked about different types of tremors, involuntary rhythmical trembling or shaking movements, as well as dystonia, involuntary prolonged and often painful muscle contractions. He discussed some diagnoses where this type of function disorder is common. Initial treatment is of the primary disease.

The day was rounded off by Merete Bakke, DMD with a lecture entitled Odontological/neurological problems and treatment with botulinum toxin (BTX). BTX is produced by the *Clostridium botulinum*, and is held to be one of the most toxic substances in the world. The toxin paralyzes muscles and glands and may cause dryness of the mouth, eyes and mucous membranes. BTX is used in very small doses to treat oromandibular dystonia, neurological diseases, stroke, pain in the Masseter muscle, luxation of the jaw, as well as for purely cosmetic purposes. The toxin is active during about 3-6 months, after which a new injection is given to maintain its effect. The patient should be given advice concerning dryness of the mouth and diet. Mouth-opening and training exercises should be performed to preserve treatment effects.

All in all, it was an interesting and informative day where we had the opportunity to learn about different types occlusal physiological problems and their treatment.

John Bratel named new head of Mun-H-Center



John Bratel took over the duties as the new head of Mun-H-Center on September 1, 2009. John received his degree in dentistry in 1977 and his doctorate degree in 1997 (thesis: "Adverse effects of dental materials"). Prior to joining Mun-H, John was a senior dentist at the Oral Medicine Clinic at the School of Dentistry in Göteborg. He has extensive experience in treating patients with orofacial disorders.

John looks forward to tackling the challenges of combining clinical practice with the research and development duties involved in the national activities of the competence center.