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STA System Makes Local Anesthesia Delivery Painless and Efficient

By Paul J. Watkins

For over 150 years, the dental syringe has been the standard instrument for administering local anesthesia, but it has been far from ideal. For the dentist, placing the injection in the correct location involves a fair amount of educated guessing, and the time spent waiting for the anesthetic to take effect can keep dentists and their staff from working as efficiently as possible.

For patients, the sight of the dental syringe (and the associated discomfort) often rivals the sound of the dental drill for creating anxiety. Add to that the residual numbness that makes it difficult to eat and talk afterwards, often forcing them to postpone business or social engagements, and it is evident why so many patients are less than enthusiastic about dental injections.

During the last century, most of the advances in dental local anesthesia were limited to the development of the anesthetics themselves until 1997, when Milestone Scientific, Inc. introduced The Wand, the first computer-controlled local anesthetic delivery (C-CLAD) system.

Today, the Single Tooth Anesthesia (STA) System, the latest generation of that groundbreaking Wand technology, is now available, allowing dentists to administer traditional and newer, state-of-the-art injections more comfortably, more easily and more successfully than with the dental syringe. "It's major innovative feature is DPS [Dynamic Pressure Sensing] technology," says Eugene R. Casagrande, D.D.S., Director of International and Professional Relations for Milestone Scientific. "DPS inherent in the STA System allows, for the first time, continuous, real-time pressure-sensing feedback during the injection. The STA System assists in finding the optimal injection site to place the needle by offering audio and visual confirmation when administering an Intraligamentary (Modified PDL) Injection. It also maintains a consistent, controlled flow rate of anesthetic delivery below the patient's pain threshold, thereby eliminating gingival damage and bone resorption. The STA Intraligamentary Injection is significantly different than a traditional PDL injection performed with a traditional dental syringe or high-pressure syringe. The traditional PDL delivers a low volume of anesthetic under excessively high pressures. In contrast, the STA Intraligamentary Injection delivers a larger volume under minimal pressure, providing a comfortable injection with profound anesthesia and longer duration. It can be used as a primary injection to anesthetize any maxillary or mandibular tooth without producing collateral numbness. DPS is unique; no other anesthetic delivery

device has it." The STA also features the STA Wand Handpiece, which is ultra lightweight and ergonomically designed to provide superior tactile sense and needle control.

Two palatal injections are also uniquely associated with the STA's computer-controlled technology. The AMSA produces pulpal anesthesia from the second pre-molar to the central incisor and anesthesia to the related palatal and buccal/labial tissues — without numbing the patient's lip and face. When given bilaterally, this injection anesthetizes 10 teeth, using about one quarter of the anesthetic it would take with a regular syringe, and produces no collateral numbness. The other palatal injection, the P-ASA, anesthetizes the six anterior teeth — cuspid to cuspid — and all related gingival tissues, again, without producing any collateral numbness to the patient's lip and face.

Dr. Casagrande, who practiced cosmetic and restorative

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My Pension Fund Took a Beating, So I Can't Afford to Sell Now!

By Kim Iannotte

Dentists are making this statement or other similar statements all over the United States. We hear it every day. What's really interesting is the number of doctors who see this from a different perspective. Read on, and you'll see what we mean.

Many of us have lived long enough to know that there are times that can be good ... and times that can be bad. Some people have made as much money in bad times as they have made during the good times. It is often just a matter of perspective. Is the glass half full ... or half empty? Are you looking for opportunities or excuses? The difference can make all the difference in your life and your quality of life.

America is the land of opportunity. The biggest problem for most people is recognizing an opportunity when it stares you

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clinical update

dentistry for over 30 years in Los Angeles, says the STA allows a *win-win-win* situation for the dentist, the patient and the practice: "It is a *win* for the dentist because injections are easier to administer, more successful and less stressful. It is a *win* for the patient because injections are more comfortable and often don't produce collateral numbness to the lips, face or tongue. It is a *win* for the practice because of increased patient referrals, fewer cancellations, faster onset of anesthesia and the ability to anesthetize both lower arches without collateral anesthesia at the same appointment, so efficiency and productivity are increased."

Just because patients are not complaining about traditional syringe injections doesn't mean those injections can't be delivered more comfortably and with less stress for both the patient and the dentist, says Dr. Casagrande. "With the STA, patients will appreciate that their dentist has gone above and beyond to make the most important and difficult part of the dental appointment to them, 'the shot,' as comfortable as possible. This results in pleased patients, compliments and increased patient referrals. If a dentist is *good* using a syringe, imagine how *great* they could be by using the STA."

For more information about the STA System, call Milestone Scientific at 1-800-862-1125, or visit www.milesci.com or STAs4U.com.

Paul J. Watkins is a freelance writer specializing in health care topics. He may be contacted by e-mail at WatkinsPJ@aol.com. ■

in the face. It's easy to understand the doctor's perspective that thinks he/she has to wait until the market recovers before selling. Forget "quality of life," keep that office going for a few more years until the stock market comes back.

Wait a minute, if dentists put off selling their practices, then there are going to be fewer practices for sale. If there are fewer practices for sale, practice values will go up (and they are). Now, it does not take a rocket scientist to figure that the time to sell is when prices are up, not down.

OK, so maybe now is the best time to sell in order to get the most money for your practice. So, what do you do with the money once you get it? After all, the stock market is down, so who would want to buy stocks when they are at an all time low? It is certainly not someone who has lost a lot of money because they previously bought stock at the high end of the market. No, buying stock while prices are down does not make sense ... or does it?

Maybe this could start a new trend in thinking. Sell the practice while prices are high ... and buy stock while the prices are low. Who knows, something like this could really catch on. Doctors could actually take advantage of an opportunity and perhaps even make more money. On top of that, they actually might begin enjoying a better "quality of life" now, eliminate a lot of responsibility and headaches and even continue to practice dentistry for the next five or 10 years.

Wait, maybe it's better to wait for the stock market to recover and prices are high once again. Then, more dentists will be selling, and a lot of practices will come on the market, and practice values will drop. Then you could sell low ... and buy high. It's a tough thing to keep straight, but if you are confused, then give AFTCO a call, and we'll help you through it.

Kim Iannotte, senior transition analyst with AFTCO, has been advising medical and dental professionals for more than 18 years in areas relating to practice transitions and practice financial management. Her broad range of experience provides dentists with a unique and comprehensive approach to many different strategies in practice transition. A registered dental hygienist with a master's degree from Rutgers University, Kim lectures for dental groups on practice appraisals, adding an associate, practice mergers and transitions. She also has four locations throughout New Jersey. ■