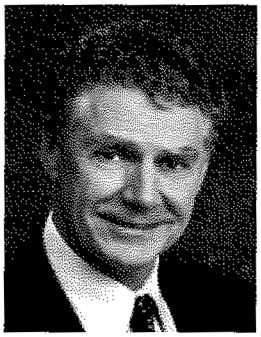
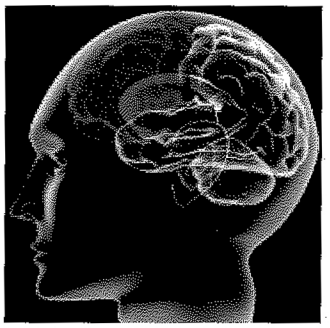


A BRAIN WAVE



EDITOR'S CORNER

By Neil McLeod, BDS, LDS, RCS, DDS

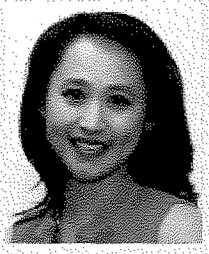
Somebody once said "Preservation of tooth equals preservation of youth", it was one of my professors and I have been quoting the line ever since. It seems like a useful maxim that members of our profession can rattle off to good effect when trying to motivate patients to be compliant with our home care recommendations. The fact is though, it was never more true, so I encourage you all to latch on and quote it.

A few weeks ago I attended a lecture given by Dr. Marc Milstein, Lecturer and Scientist at UCLA. His subject, "Key Insights Into Protecting Your Brain." It was a fascinating talk. It linked oral health clearly with brain health, and in a number of ways. First of all, new research has clearly connected inflammation in the mouth to heart disease and now brain disease.

The findings indicate that inflammation increases the likelihood of developing dementia. Dr. Milstein surprised us all by stating that the brain literally shrinks to 40% of its volume during deep sleep, and that in doing so it flushes out a wave of fluid from between the axons into the cerebrospinal fluid which then drains into venous capturing through a duct opening into the neck. He explained that inflammation interferes with this process. He also stressed that if some one is showing signs of dementia, that first question that should be asked is "Are they suffering from sleep apnea?" The interruption to healthy sleep patterns predisposes our brains to "dementia causing changes".

Well that was good enough for me to justify an even more enthusiastic exhortation to my patients. Not caring for your teeth will cause you to look old, and will actually age your brain. So here is another tool in our kit to encourage our patients to maintain good oral hygiene and do whatever it takes to ensure long regular healthy sleep. That might include using a CPAP, losing weight, exercising, eating better, walking every day, learning something new regularly, and of course brushing and flossing your teeth.

So here is the brain wave, add "the mouth and brain aging" and "gum disease and losing you mind" to your dialogue with patients. For more bright ideas on how to manage your practice and your professional career, contact us at LADS. Happy New Year!



EXECUTIVE ORDER

By Teresa Chien, Executive Director

The Board of Directors and staff of LADS spent seven months last year devising a three to five year strategic plan for the Society. After three years of restructuring and change, it was time to move into the next phase of LADS' development. What resulted was an ambitious but feasible plan of action to continue to make LADS viable, relevant and necessary for our members' success.

LADS will continue to localize and diversify the kind of continuing education we offer. With Area Representatives in Beverly Hills, Downey, Mid-Wilshire and Downtown LA, LADS began with some community-oriented study clubs last year. This year, we will add to your educational options more hands-on learning experiences and more peer-to-peer learning – all in the same intimate study club environment.

LADS also expanded its Auxiliary Program with the addition of Coronal Polishing Certification. We have always been one of the few societies offering dental team services to assist with your overall practice excellence. Now, we are the only society offering coronal polishing training for dental assistants. Just imagine how productive your practice will be with the additional hygiene help of a qualified dental assistant!

Finally, LADS is putting a greater emphasis on leadership development in the coming years. We have offered complimentary leadership development trainings to LADS volunteers the last couple of years. In return, we have seen those volunteers grow and excel, not only in their leadership positions within LADS, but in their practices as well. The many positive changes you have seen at LADS has stemmed largely from the ideas and trainings of those who have undergone leadership development. We're now offering it to more members!

So if you have ever considered getting more involved at LADS, the timing could not be better. Whether it's for a titled leadership position or a short-term project, LADS will be able to find a role that suits your expectations. LADS volunteers are the first to be considered for leadership training, so don't be afraid to step up!

LADS is evolving. Your professional success has always been our top priority. The changes you have seen and the Board's strategic plan are designed to adapt to your changing needs as dentistry is hit on all fronts by macro factors. Please do not hesitate to let us know how LADS is doing toward this goal. You are the best advocate for your own success, so tell us how we can help.