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Administrators  
*welcomes*  
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Over 500 employees,  
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Visit NEDA at  
Booth #523 -  
Yankee Dental  
Congress  
2002!

For the third year,  
the NEDA team will  
participate at the  
Yankee Dental Congress  
2002 on January 31st  
through February 3rd.  
Stop by our booth  
to learn more about  
the Dividends for  
Dentists<sup>SM</sup> Program.

See map insert.

## Dividends for Dentists<sup>SM</sup> Program Announced

Dear Colleagues:

Please allow me to introduce you to New England Dental Administrators and, additionally, provide you with an exciting opportunity to buy a new Volvo automobile at substantial savings.

New England Dental Administrators, LLC (NEDA) is a third party administrator delivering a full range of self-insured dental benefit plans to purchasers and employers throughout Massachusetts. NEDA excels in its plan design flexibility and administrative expertise. Presently, NEDA has a statewide network of 1,200 participating dentists and a rapidly expanding subscriber base.

As part of its participation in the Dividends for Dentists<sup>SM</sup> program, NEDA recently entered into a partnership with Volvo of North America. This relationship provides a unique opportunity for NEDA's participating dentists and their staffs to buy or lease a new Volvo at 2% over dealer cost! To "sweeten" an already attractive deal, from **now until January 31, 2002**, Volvo is offering a **Special Purchase/Lease Program**. This permits NEDA participating dentists additional discounts (in addition to the 2% over dealer-cost package) ranging from \$500-\$1,500 off the purchase price of all new 2002 Volvos! The size of the additional discount depends on the model of Volvo purchased or leased.

As the saying goes, "You can't win if you don't play." The Volvo opportunity only exists for those dentists who are contracted participants with NEDA. Do not let this be a barrier for you. Please call 1-877-603-8068 to receive more information regarding NEDA. I would personally be happy to meet with you, at your convenience, to discuss how you can participate with NEDA.

NEDA will also have a booth at the Yankee Dental Congress. Please stop by and let us introduce ourselves and explain NEDA's mission in Massachusetts, as well as the substantial Dividends for Dentists<sup>SM</sup> enjoyed by our participating dentists.

Thomas P. Quinn, DMD, MHP  
Dental Director



**NOTE:** In order to participate in this exceptional offer, you must be a participating member dentist of New England Dental Administrators. For more information, call Melanie Watroba at 1-877-603-8068, or stop by our booth at Yankee Dental.



### Dividends for Dentists<sup>SM</sup> Program includes...

- ✓ Volvo Discount
- ✓ Dental Elite Premium  
Toothbrush Savings
- ✓ Dynamic Dental Safety  
(DDS) Assistance

If you are a participating dentist, by now you have received the information on Dividends for Dentists<sup>SM</sup> which was recently announced by NEDA to show our appreciation for the loyalty and support of participating dentists in Massachusetts.

*This is the second in a series of articles developed by Thomas Quinn, DMD, MHP.*

## Sleep Disorders: Dentistry's Role O V E R V I E W

This is an exciting time for dentistry and the dental profession, as witnessed by the ever-expanding number of disciplines within the profession. The time has passed when dentistry meant restoring teeth, fabricating dentures, and extractions in an environment restricted to only the treatment of the dentition and related structures. For those who so choose, dentistry now crosses many lines into many related disciplines with a greater-than-ever relationship to medicine and the general health of the patient.

Sleep disorders and the role of dentistry, especially in co-managing patients with obstructive sleep apnea, is becoming more significant with each passing day. The practicing dentist has the opportunity to assist patients at a variety of levels, starting with the recognition of a sleep disorder, to proper referral for further evaluation, to participation in the management of the diagnosed sleep disorder. Dentistry's role in the field of sleep medicine has its greatest potential impact in the management of those patients who have sleep-related breathing disorders (snoring and sleep apnea). More important, nearly every discipline in dentistry needs to be aware of sleep disorders and their potential impact.

The practice of sleep medicine is a relatively new discipline or specialty in medical practice. Similarly, the recognition of sleep disorders and their contribution to other related health issues is only now beginning to be adequately recognized. Health issues that are associated with sleep disorders or inadequate sleep range from depression and anxiety, to cardiovascular problems such as hypertension, irregular heart rate, coronary artery disease, and even stroke.

### Distribution and Disease Determination

Sleep disorders in the general population often go unrecognized or are not considered when attempting to resolve a



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patient's ongoing conditions, complaints, or disease. At present the prevalence of sleep disorders in the general population varies to some degree. It is important to recognize that 40 million Americans have some type of chronic sleep disturbance, and 20 million have intermittent sleep-related problems. A frequently cited study estimates that 4% of middle-aged men and 2% of middle-aged women meet the minimum requirement of sleep apnea syndrome.

Sleep disorders comprise a wide variety of potential diagnoses. While many of the diagnoses are quite rare, the more common sleep disorders are the most frequently diagnosed conditions and those for which treatment is most commonly sought. A most recent survey found that 67.8% of persons referred to a sleep center for evaluation had obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) as the primary diagnosis. The same study noted that there has been a six-fold increase in the number of patients referred to sleep centers for clinical evaluation, most of which were referred because of symptoms related to nocturnal apnea or because of excessive daytime sleepiness. Unfortunately, even with the increased testing and subsequent diagnosis, it is estimated that for every patient who

receives treatment, there are 20 persons who have had their problem diagnosed and who remain untreated.

Sleep apnea is probably the most prevalent of all sleep disorders. OSA is the most prevalent of the apneas. The dentist can have a variety of roles in the field of sleep medicine:

- Help in the recognition of sleep disorders through the history when initially evaluating a patient or at the periodic recall visit and then making the appropriate recommendations and referrals.
- Recognize the oral manifestations of snoring and sleep apnea by looking beyond the dentition into the pharyngeal area including the tongue, the uvula, the soft palate and tonsils, and into the posterior pharyngeal areas.
- Be involved in the management of the patient's care through the utilization of oral appliances, performing surgical procedures, or offering the patient advice and information on the many preventive measures that may be helpful in attaining a better night's sleep.

### Airway Evaluation

The evaluation of the airway begins at the tongue and proceeds into the oral pharynx. The condition of the tongue, its size, and related anatomic changes should be observed and noted. Another important finding is the relation of the tongue to the oral airway in a relaxed state. The Mallampai Score has been used in anesthesia for many years as a means of determining the difficulty of performing an intubation, as the tongue increasingly seems to obstruct the airway. It has been found that the score is also a predictor for determining severity of sleep apnea for some people.

Tonsillar size has a direct relation to the severity of sleep apnea. It is well recognized that increased tonsillar size reduces the airway opening and can contribute to sleep-related breathing disorders. The

## Sleep Disorders: Dentistry's Role: OVERVIEW

(continued from page 2)

size of the uvula and observations of the soft palate angulation should also be noted. In snoring, mouth breathing, or OSA patients, these structures are subjected to trauma repeatedly throughout the night, causing a change in their appearance and size.

Assessment of the effort of mandibular repositioning, both vertically and horizontally, may prove helpful. Having the patient open the mouth and advance the mandible may improve the airway and thus allow more efficient breathing with less apparent resistance. Assessment of the head and neck musculature may reveal muscle tenderness and/or trigger points for referred pain manifesting itself as headaches. Temporomandibular joint assessment is also important in differential diagnosis of pain. Additionally, if a continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) or a repositioning device is being considered, healthy joint function is necessary.

Headache is a common finding among patients with sleep-disorder breathing. In many instances, headache may be the symptom for which the patient seeks medical attention. For the dentist comfortable in managing patients with headache and orofacial pain, the discovery and management of headache concomitantly with the sleep disorder can be of great benefit for the patient.

### Management

Physicians have several medical treatment modalities available to treat upper airway sleep disorder (UASD) patients, including behavior modification, CPAP, and surgical procedures. The desired results are an increase in life expectancy, a decrease in health problems, and an improvement in life quality.

The responsibility of dentistry in patients with sleep-disordered breathing is to be able to recognize patients with sleep disorders, refer these patients to a physician with an interest in sleep disorders, and treat these patients when requested by a physician. Following medical studies, including a sleep study, the physician

may refer the patient back to the dentist for treatment with an oral appliance.

Oral appliances are a viable option for treating patients with sleep disordered breathing. The American Academy of Sleep Medicine has established criteria for oral appliance therapy. Presently 38 oral appliances are commercially available (with FDA approval) as a clinical option for the management of snoring and other sleep-related disorders. The basic mode of function of these oral appliances is to prevent the tongue from approaching the posterior wall of the pharynx and causing an obstruction. The posterior movement of the base of the tongue is minimized or prevented by use of either a tongue-retaining device or a mandibular advancement device, both of which contain concomitant maxillary and mandibular appliance components.

### Summary

Many patients with upper airway sleep disorder can be successfully treated with oral appliance therapy. It is necessary for dentists to recognize these patients and refer them to a physician for further evaluation. Dentists must not become the primary care providers for these patients or attempt to treat a medical problem with an oral appliance without proper diagnosis, which usually requires a sleep study and can only be diagnosed by a physician. Dentists must also be able to treat the patients referred by the physicians and to follow accepted procedures when fabricating, inserting, and titrating the mandibular appliance position, and providing follow-up care for oral appliance therapy. In addition, the dental community needs to continue to heighten the awareness in their local medical community and in their patient population as to the possible contribution of oral appliances therapy to the management of snoring and some of the sleep-related breathing disorders.

*In future issues, we will explore other oral health issues.*

## New England Dental Administrators sponsors United Nations Event

On October 24, the United Nations Association of Greater Boston held a luncheon in honor of United Nations Day at the Boston Harbor Hotel. NEDA sponsored U.N./U.S. Dual Flag Pins as gifts to the guests at the luncheon. The keynote speaker, Ambassador Donald F. McHenry, former U.S. Permanent Representative to the UN, spoke on "Unilateralism in an Age of Terror." The United Nations Association of Greater Boston organizes various events intended to promote greater understanding about international affairs and the role of the United Nations in helping to improve peace, security and human welfare throughout the world.

# 1,200

*Participating dentist network—still growing!*



*NEDA continues to build a strong dentist network in Massachusetts.*

*Credentialed contracts exceeded our expectations—now over 1,200!*

## New England Dental Administrators moves to Two Delta Drive



*New England Dental Administrators, Two Delta Drive, Concord, New Hampshire*

On November 11th, NEDA moved to a brand new building located at Two Delta Drive. The new space allows us to serve you better while providing NEDA with expansion opportunity. While our street address is changed from One Delta Drive to Two Delta Drive, our PO Box, telephone numbers, and zip code remain the same.

[www.nedallc.com](http://www.nedallc.com)

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## NEDA Partners with Dynamic Dental Safety (DDS)

As part of its Dividends for Dentists<sup>SM</sup> program, New England Dental Administrators, LLC (NEDA) is pleased to announce its association with Dynamic Dental Safety (DDS). The DDS program provides assistance in making the dental office compliant with all federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Bloodborne Pathogen regulations.

This program provides a dental office with the following:

1. a thorough assessment based on a walk-through and evaluation of current regulatory criteria, including an evaluation of workplace practices and infection control techniques;
2. a written report outlining all physical plant and documentation issues with guidelines and solutions to attain full compliance; and
3. additional visits during the year to promote and ensure a "culture of safety" for the dentist, staff, and patients.

The program is designed as a four-hour, on-site program. It affords a practice the opportunity to maintain full compliance in a minimal amount of time. The DDS program offers many benefits over a full-day seminar or series of educational tapes. The savings associated with this program are considerable, in terms of actual costs and valuable time saved.

NEDA is pleased to offer this program to its participating dentists as part of its Dividends for Dentists<sup>SM</sup> program. For further details, please contact Melanie Watroba at 1-877-603-8068, or stop by our booth at Yankee Dental.

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U.S. POSTAGE  
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