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## **Council of European Chief Dental Officers**

### **A request on advice on sugar and oral health from European Commission DG V**

At their meeting held in Helsinki on 25-27 November 1999, the Council of European Chief Dental Officers (CECDO), agreed the following consensus statement on sugar and oral health:

*"Frequent consumption of sugar containing foods and drinks is the most important cause of tooth decay (caries)."*

Prior to the meeting, in order to gather expert opinions, Chief Dental Officers in the E.U. and the E.E.A. were asked to consider specifically; the role of sugar in the caries process; the role of sugar in other oral diseases; recommendations / restrictions on the use of sugar from an odontologic point of view; and, possible new knowledge on the matter that can change/has changed professional attitudes.

An annex accompanying the consensus statement states that "sugar" is not an exact expression in connection with dental caries, the term "fermentable carbohydrates" being preferred. The evidence linking fermentable carbohydrate intake to caries levels whilst demonstrable at a population level (but not necessarily at an individual level) has been, it is claimed, obscured by preventive methods, such as widespread use of fluorides. However, the association still exists and is of vital importance for the aetio-pathogenesis of dental caries.

The importance of sugar containing between meal snacks or drinks is highlighted. It is also concluded that sticky food items with a slow oral clearance are more harmful than rapidly cleared liquids. The need for continued awareness on the part of dental professionals of the damaging effects of fermentable carbohydrates is emphasised.

The document concluded that although a sugar rich diet may enhance the amount and deposition of dental plaque, there is no conclusive evidence to demonstrate that sugars have a direct detrimental effect on the periodontal tissues.

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## **News from Hungary Fluoridated salt**

Professor Jolan Banoczy reports that moves are underway to enhance the provision of fluoridated salt throughout Hungary at a concentration of 250 mg F/kg. Despite the work of K Toth on fluoridated salt, performed in Szeged in the early 1970's which demonstrated the caries-preventive potential of this fluoride vehicle, its general introduction has been delayed due to organisational difficulties and the anti-fluoride lobby.

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## **News from Turkey Oral Health Survey**

The Newspaper has been provided with details of a survey of oral health in Turkey in 1990. Involving 6,000 individuals of all ages, from five states, the report demonstrated a caries prevalence of 80.8% at age 12 with a mean DMFT of 2.73. The report also provides details of dental manpower in Turkey and outlines plans for future service provision. Further details are available from: Prof. G.B. Saydam, Dis Hekimligi Fakultesi, Toplum Agaz Dis Sagligi Bilim Dalı, 34390 Istanbul, Turkey.

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## **News from Germany Kindergarten toothbrushing initiative**

Prof. A Borutta reports on a preventive dental programme undertaken by the Dental School of the Friedrich-Schiller University of Jena, in Thuringia. The project involves dental students visiting nurseries and kindergartens where toothbrushing instruction is provided in conjunction with a healthy breakfast. The programme was initiated in response to the high level of dental caries in the region, only 30.4% of children being caries-free at age six.

## **Healthcare reforms**

Steps continue to reform the organisation and delivery of healthcare in Germany. New legislation enacted on 1st January 2000 provides for a greater focus on disease prevention and health promotion, a stabilisation of the financial contribution of patients to the statutory health insurance system, the introduction of group prophylaxis for high caries risk children and changes in the remuneration of physicians and dentists.

Other suggested benefits include greater cooperation between ambulatory and stationary provision, a strengthening of the position of the family doctor and an increased emphasis on quality assurance and quality management.

These reforms, known as Health Reform 2000 were introduced by the government elected in 1998 and build on reforms introduced in the early 1990s to curtail escalating healthcare costs.

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## **4th Congress EADPH 2000 in Cork, Ireland.**

The joint BASCD and EADPH Conference will be held in University College Cork, Ireland on the 14 - 15 September, 2000. The theme of the Scientific Programme will be "Reducing Inequalities in Europe: Role of Fluoride". Further details can be found at the following web site:

<http://www.ucc.ie/dru/confer/index.html>

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## **EADPH Newpage - information sharing**

.This newpage is designed as a forum whereby members of the Association can share information which may be of interest to those in other states. All contributions will be considered and should be forwarded to:

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