

## Keep an open mind

The Information Age is characterized by an ever-increasing number of publications in all fields. However, some clinicians, professors, and researchers ignore the results obtained in recent studies. This aversion to the information presented by new scientific data, which may indicate problems in the “established” procedures, is counterproductive. It is true that dentistry currently achieves good results, considerable efficacy, and relative safety with most of its treatments. Nevertheless, this does not justify resting on our laurels; research on and development of new treatments and products to obtain better results in different areas of dentistry are still necessary, and represent the main reason for the improvement in the quality and longevity of established dental treatments. Yet when new concepts conflict with current thought and suggest altering some treatments or protocols, an all-too-human resistance to accepting the new approach is sometimes noted.

For instance, bonding procedures have undergone a remarkable development in dentistry, with some adhesive restorations attaining a longevity of 15 to 20 years. This fact does not make superfluous those studies that evaluate the use of collagen cross-linkers, MMPs inhibitors, or the development of new polymers, which aim to increase the bonding stability. Bleaching treatment promotes satisfactory results in a short period of time and with relative safety; however, it is valid and necessary to evaluate methods to reduce the toxicity of these treatments, as well as to search for the best concentration and duration of treatment for the products to provide the best results with maximum safety. Although resin composite

presents an adequate degree of conversion combined with excellent mechanical properties, the development of materials with better properties, maximum cure, and lower polymerization shrinkage is both necessary and justified. These are just a few examples of recent advances that are related only to restorative dentistry.

A new technique or the alteration of an established procedure is not based on a single study, but is supported by various studies, showing that the new approach promotes better, more reliable, and safer results than the old technique when used in different situations. The studies are not performed to prove that the current treatments or researchers are wrong, but to improve dentistry and promote better treatment for our patients.

A different point of view is important in science in order to compare new data with the current results. Improvement in any scientific endeavor (including dentistry) requires top-quality studies and laboratories; moreover, an open mind able to accept new ideas and concepts is crucial, leading to clinical procedures that are based completely on scientific evidence. If this is not the case, we will produce more and more studies with no contribution to clinical procedures.



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