

## ***Happy New Year and all the best wishes for 2004***

### ***Annual Perio Academy meeting in San Francisco: an Epilogue***

During the **Innovations in Periodontics** section of the meeting this past September, I presented a lecture about a new methodology I developed for performing **Connective Tissue Grafts (CTGs)**. These grafts are key components of today's **Periodontal Plastic Surgery (PPS)** armamentarium. **CTGs** routinely facilitate esthetic repairs of root exposure problems related to gingival recession. The presentation was well received, and I will be publishing an article describing the technique in a forthcoming issue of the Academy's Journal.

As a related item, one of the important **take home messages** I returned with from this West Coast meeting was the great potential for synergy between **PPS** and **Restorative Dentistry** in achieving optimum treatment results. To illustrate .... you can probably recall a patient with a "gummy" smile who came to your office thinking "caps" would improve his/her appearance. Only by advising the patient that an initial **PPS** procedure, **Esthetic Crown Lengthening**, to transform visible tooth form into the proper proportions, would restorative treatment ("caps") yield the desired outcome. **What periodontists take away, they can also give back!** For example, rather than extending composite resin *veneer-type* fillings onto exposed roots to correct hypersensitivity, shallow root caries, erosions, etc, a more natural and esthetic result for the exposed roots can be obtained with a **CTG**. In fact, even if an extended composite had been placed at one time, and the patient is now unhappy with the elongated appearance of the tooth, the following can be done: remove the composite *veneer*, treat the root, and then graft connective tissue onto the exposed root for a stable, functional and improved esthetic result. Since seeing is believing, I want to call your attention to the **Yankee Dental Congress #29** program for Friday morning. To get a first hand view of the value of **CTGs** for exposed roots, and the overall **PPS – Restorative Synergy**, come to my **Minuteman Lecture** at 11:30 – 12:30. Hope to see you there to continue this discussion.

### ***Better yet, see it Live!***

If you can't make it to the Yankee Meeting, you always have the option of a front row seat at my office to see a **CTG** procedure being performed. Over the years I have hosted post-doctoral students, visiting dentists attending Harvard's continuing education programs, and referring colleagues for these one-on-one sessions. Aside from being an optimal way to understand what the surgery entails, when you take the time to be present, it sends a powerful message of interest to your patient about their treatment. They are always very impressed with the professionalism exhibited, and feel confident they are getting extra-special attention. By the way, patients are generally very happy to be the center of attention!

### ***TGIF***

Starting in January, after many years of a set schedule, I will be switching my teaching day at Harvard from Thursday to Friday. The implication is that in 2004 I will be working in my office on Thursdays rather than Fridays. At least one member of my staff will, as usual, be in the office every day for all our patients' administrative needs.