



# RESOURCE

# Connections

## Got Lead? Product Reliability or Liability

by Barbara R Rodriguez, CDT and  
Linda Harvey, RDH, MS

The most recent consumer fear and potential liability for dentists concerns the use of lead in crowns and bridges. This issue came to the ADA's attention earlier this year. Since that time, the ADA and the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) began conducting separate investigations.

Currently, the ADA believes this problem is not widespread, as only about 15-20% of dentists outsource their lab work to lower-cost, foreign countries. The FDA, however, requires crowns and other dental restorations made in the USA to be lead-free.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) states that trace amounts of lead (200 ppm), such as the amount that one Ohio news outlet reportedly found in several dental crowns, are "extremely unlikely to cause adverse health effects." Comparatively, the Consumer Product Safety Commission's safety threshold for surface coatings on items such as toys is 600 ppm. With the information at hand, the CDC does not recommend patients postpone needed dental treatment or have existing dental crowns, bridges or other prostheses removed.

The issue of lead in crowns and bridges may impact your practice in several ways.

- Know your products. Does your lab include an Ident Alloy Certificate with their work? This certificate verifies the alloys and composition of the alloys used (gold, zinc, etc.) meet the FDA standards. New Florida legislation (Senate Bill 2760) goes into effect January 1, 2009 requiring dental labs to disclose to dentists where a product was manufactured, what materials were used in each restoration and to provide certificates of authenticity.
- Talk with your dental lab. Inquire whether or not they outsource to facilities in other countries. If so, investigate further to determine whether the materials used contain lead. If you find you have delivered sub-quality crowns or bridges, be prepared to contact all the affected patients. You have a legal and ethical duty to protect the health and safety of your patients.

See "Got Lead?" Page 3

## Employee-Paid Insurances

*Improve Benefit Packages With  
No Cost to Employer*

By Lynn Spears  
AFLAC  
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You care about your employees and want to keep them happy. Salary is a given, but health benefits are ever more critical to employees. Sadly, the costs of employer-paid group health benefits are often unaffordable.

You need Aflac. Aflac provides employee-paid supplemental insurance and more, on a totally voluntary basis. Aflac policies are owned and paid for by the employee. There is no employer matching. The employer may also receive FICA savings (7.65% on every pre-tax dollar) and possibly reduce workers' compensation claims, while easing your employees' stress over health care costs.

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# LOOSE LIPS

*Tidbits of wisdom that may or may not be loosely related to dentistry*

## Stepping Out

- In ancient Egypt, the sandal demonstrated a person's rank in society.
- Aristocratic women in ancient Greece owned as many as twenty pairs of shoes, with a style to match every occasion.
- In the West, shoes have had a place in marriage ceremonies for many centuries. In some cultures, the bride's father threw his shoes at the newlyweds to signify the transfer of authority from father to husband.
- Pointed shoes originated in France, reportedly the invention of a Count of Anjou who wished to hide his deformed hooves.
- The first shoe manufactured in the United States was the handiwork of one Thomas Beard, a Mayflower pilgrim, who nailed together the first pair of American shoes in 1628.
- The average American woman now buys about five pairs of shoes each year, and the average man, about two pairs, as a rule men's shoes last longer and remain in fashion longer than women's footwear. ♦

### Kudos Korner



Kim Knapp, owner of Dental Temps of Northeast Florida, Inc has been elected President of The Women's Business Owners of North Florida for 2008-2009 [www.wbonfl.org](http://www.wbonfl.org) Representing The Women's Business Owners of North Florida and serving on the Board of The International Alliance for Women [www.tiaw.org](http://www.tiaw.org). ♦

## 2nd Annual Dental Hygiene Appreciation Award

Recognize that special hygienist in your office. Is your hygienist someone who goes above and beyond? Does he/she possess unique attributes that shine in his/her patient care? What makes your hygienist special—team spirit, length of time with your practice?

In honor of National Dental Hygiene Month this October, Kim Knapp, Dental Temps of Northeast Florida and Linda Harvey, Horizon Consulting Group invite you to submit your entry. One winner will be chosen from each of the following counties: Duval, St. John's, Clay and Nassau. Each winner will receive \$50 and a commemorative certificate.

Deadline for submissions is September 26, 2008. Winners will be announced at the October 9th, Northeast Florida Dental Hygiene Association meeting. Call Kim Knapp (220-4459) or Linda Harvey (573-2232) for your entry form. ♦

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\* Aflac insurance policies are sold on a voluntary basis at the worksite.

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Lynn Spears, a former Certified Expanded Duty Dental Assistant, is an Agent for Aflac. If you'd like to provide Aflac for your employees, contact Lynn at (904) 708-8622 or email [Lynn\\_Spears@us.aflac.com](mailto:Lynn_Spears@us.aflac.com).



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- Talk with your patients. Be prepared to answer questions from patients in an honest, non-defensive manner. While SB2760 does not specifically require patients be given a copy of the certificate of authenticity; existing patient rights permit patients to request a copy of this information. Welcome patient questions as a marketing and teaching opportunity to reinforce the quality of your care.

Several lawsuits have already been filed by patients against their dentist. While these instances are rare, take advantage of this opportunity to educate your patients about the reliability and quality of the care provided in your practice.

For additional information, visit the ADA's website: [www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org)♦

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**Connecting to bring you strategies  
for enhancing your practice!**

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are your best  
resource!**

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**“Got Lead? Product Reliability or Liability”...See page one inside.**

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**Linda Drevenstedt, M.S.** Linda's "Steel Magnolia" approach and her in-depth knowledge of management and leadership comes from her diverse background which includes dental hygiene consulting, practice management consulting, a Masters in Healthcare Administration, and group practice administration. She is a member of the Academy of Dental Management Consultants, the National Speaker's Association and the Academy of Dental Practice Administration.

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