

Editorial

“Listen to your patient, he is telling you the diagnosis—William Osler”

Diagnosis is one of the most neglected part of our Speciality, we call ourselves Conservative Dentist and Endodontist, but how many of us are willing to give vital pulp therapy a chance before doing Endodontics. As the Endodontists in us flourish, the Conservative Dentist is often idle or kept at an arms distance.

Part of the problem is also with the diagnostic methods. From as far as one can remember, thermal tests, EPT are the only practical means to detect the vitality of the pulp and these we all know are not very reliable. Newer methods like Pulse oximetry and Laser Doppler remain as “recent advances” for the past 15 years or so. So when in doubt do an Endo is now a common procedure instead of giving vital pulp therapy a chance.

There is tremendous research in equipment’s and dental materials but unfortunately diagnostic aids is often ignored. Until we have a definitive diagnostic means, listening to the patient and a keen power of Observation should act as supporting features to other diagnostic aids in our day to day practice

It is said that Arthur Conan Doyle got inspired to create Sherlock Holmes character from his Teacher Dr Joseph Bell, a doctor by Profession at University of Edinburgh Medical School. The power of observation and listening ,in coming to a correct diagnosis of a disease was something Arthur picked up from Dr Bell, which later deeply influenced his characterisation of Sherlock Holmes. As Dr Bell stated-

“In teaching the treatment of disease and accident, all careful teachers have first to show the student how to recognize accurately the case. The recognition depends in great measure on the accurate and rapid appreciation of small points in which the diseased differs from the healthy state. In fact, the student must be taught to observe.”

So hoping all of us will be a little more “Conservative Dentist” this year and as my Professor and mentor Dr A Parameswaran used to tell “Count your success by pulps saved, not pulp extirpated”

Happy New Year and Happy Reading...

Ganesh Chitharanjan

Editor in Chief

Conservative Dentistry and Endodontic Journal

Professor and Head

Department of Conservative Dentistry and Endodontics

Sri Sankara Dental College, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, India

