

# Associate Professor in Orthodontics

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After years of study, research and clinical practice, Dawjee's contribution to Dentistry and Orthodontics in particular, has been commended. The School of Dentistry, University of Limpopo has officially honoured him with an academic promotion to Associate Professor.

Professor Salahuddin Dawjee has four degrees in Dentistry and has recently submitted a draft of his PhD thesis for evaluation. His contributions to Orthodontics include techniques and appliances to treat patients with dento-facial disharmonies as well as a feeding aid for cleft palate babies. He has published numerous scientific articles in local and orthodontic journals as well as a chapter in a book titled 'Sleep Apnoea Syndrome Research Focus' by Nova Publishers.

While his forte is clinical orthodontics, Professor Dawjee is a committed family man, a keen horseman and an ardent golfer. His mission in life is to "transform beautiful smiles to great smiles" and he most definitely lives by this code.

The Orthodontic Department of the University of Limpopo congratulates and welcomes Professor Dawjee and wishes him good luck in his pursuit to deliver "great smiles" for many years. ~



Professor Salahuddin Dawjee

## Letter to the Editor

### New treatment for abscesses?

Dear Prof Chikte,

A 37 year-old patient, presented with a peri-apical abscess in the 46/ 47 area. He admitted trying various folk remedies, including cloves, but to no avail. Before meeting his appointment with a dentist, he was advised by a herbalist to place a piece of Cannabis sativa L. (commonly known as dagga or hemp) root on the inflamed area. Shortly after application of the root to the affected area, he felt a warming sensation, after which the abscess erupted. The abscess healed with no additional treatment required.

Herbal remedies are used by 80% of the population to treat a variety of illnesses, including oral health care in the form of toothbrush sticks, to treat gingivitis, toothache and apthous ulcers. Moreover, many of the plants used in oral health care have shown antimicrobial activity against oral bacteria.<sup>1</sup>

Cannabis, an illicit narcotic in many countries, is widely used in traditional African medicine.<sup>2</sup> This medicinal plant has been used by various cultures for the treatment of amongst others; chronic pain, epilepsy, asthma, psychiatric disorders, appetite stimulation or suppression. Approximately 60 cannabinoids have been isolated from Cannabis sativa and antibacterial, anti-inflammatory and analgesic activity, amongst

others, has been documented for these compounds.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, cannabis has indicated dose-dependent antinociceptive effects on experimental pain in healthy subjects<sup>3</sup> and several cannabis constituents have indicated anti-inflammatory and immunomodulatory effects.<sup>4,5</sup>

This case, according to our knowledge, serves as the first report of the use of cannabis in dental health. Could cannabis be a new treatment for abscesses?

**Candice van Wyk and Vanessa Steenkamp**

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