

Literary Review

A review of: Dentistry in Cerebral Palsy and Related Handicapping Conditions, by Solomon N. Rosenstein

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**Dentistry in Cerebral Palsy and Related Handicapping Conditions*

Author: Solomon N. Rosenstein, D.D.S.
Publisher: Charles C. Thomas, Publisher
301-327 East Lawrence Avenue
Springfield, Illinois 62717
Price: \$17.50

*The opinions expressed by the reviewer are her own and do not necessarily represent the views of the Editor or of the International Association of Oral Myology.

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This is an excellent text written by an author who has had extensive experience working with handicapped children. It is written for the general dentist or specialist who probably will see only a relatively small number of cerebral palsied patients during his/her professional career. The book provides comprehensive information on the special problems presented by the handicapped population.

Many of the dental needs of cerebral palsied children can be treated much like those of non-handicapped children; however, these special children present special problems stemming from the neuromuscular disorder. The author discusses "oral problems" and "extra-oral (non-dental) problems" which affect patient management. Included under oral problems are caries, gingival and periodontal involvement, and malocclusion. Oral problems specific to the cerebral palsied population are excessive grinding of posterior teeth; drooling; grimacing; speech, chewing, and swallowing patterns; uncontrolled and uncoordinated muscle movements.

The author states "although the non-dental problems in cerebral palsy arise from the neuromuscular

disorder and its accompanying conditions, they comprise the problems that make dental treatment of the cerebral palsied child more difficult than for the normal, non-handicapped child." He discusses specifically the problems of locomotion, stability in the dental chair, speech and hearing disorders which make communication between patient and dentist difficult, seizures and anticonvulsive medications, visual limitations, emotional disturbances leading to excessive fear and withdrawal, and mental retardation.

Rosenstein gives the reader an introduction to the various classifications of cerebral palsy and an overview of the anatomy and physiology involved—the musculature, cranial nerves, nervous system (central and peripheral), and the brain, particularly the cerebrum, cerebellum, and brain stem.

The author makes suggestions for modifying existing office equipment and instruments to make them more suitable to the needs of the handicapped child. In addition, he recommends some specialized aids such as metal rather than glass mouth mirrors and mouth props necessitated by the possibility of uncontrolled closure during dental procedures. He explains how to make and use cloth ties to help stabilize the patient in the chair.

There are also helpful hints such as how to modify a toothbrush by holding the handle over a flame to soften the plastic, then bending it so that a child with abnormal hand/arm

position can properly position the bristles on the teeth.

Rosenstein discusses premedication and sedation. The dentist must be aware of what other medications the patient takes so that he/she can prescribe compatible drugs, with careful monitoring of dosage and vigilance for undesirable reactions.

Three of the chapters are co-authored by other dental specialists:

Chapter 8 — "Orthodontics in Cerebral Palsy," written with Seymour Koster, D.D.S.

Chapter 9 — "Dental Care for Older Patients with Cerebral Palsy," written with Marvin B. King, D.D.S.

Chapter 10 — "The Use of General Anesthesia for Dental Treatment," authored by Jerry J. Adelson, D.D.S., Ed. D.

Many of the dental and orthodontic problems of the cerebral palsied child are directly related to neuromuscular inability to chew and swallow properly. As oral myologists, we should be knowledgeable for the problems and be able to assist the dental professionals. I would recommend to my colleagues that you add this book to your professional library, become thoroughly familiar with its contents, and share this information with the dentists in your community.

Reviewed by:

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