

Local dentist’s research could revolutionize pain, infection treatment

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Pain, lengthy recovery times, infection – they’re three of the biggest problems patients face when they undergo medical or dental procedures, and they’re all in the crosshairs of pioneering research by Key Biscayne’s Dr. Glenn Abrahmsohn.

Earlier this month, Abrahmsohn, owner of Dental Connection, received a fellowship from the International Academy for Dental Facial Esthetics to continue his work on two medications for which he hopes to seek Food and Drug Administration approval.

Abrahmsohn said while the drugs can be game-changers for patients and physicians everywhere, both got their start at the most personal of levels.

“These are both destructive, break-through technologies – destructive in that they change how we do things,” Abrahmsohn said. “This can change the game.”

BDA-12, which is delivered by injection, turns off the numbness caused by local anesthesia and replaces it with a non-addictive painkiller that doesn’t cause nausea and vomiting.

The product is named for Brett Abrahmsohn, son of Dr. Abrahmsohn and wife Jo, who died of leukemia when he was 12. Brett helped his father do experiments for the drug, taking great joy in not only lodging successes, but in kidding his dad by “accidentally” delivering test injections on parts of the good doctor’s arm that hadn’t been numbed.

Zapp painkiller, meanwhile, can be used as a nasal spray, mouth rinse or paste to control bacteria, meaning it helps patients stay comfortable and fend off infection. Abrahmsohn said the product – named for his mother, Zena, who has been using it for a quarter of a century to rave reviews – can be effective against a number of conditions.

Abrahmsohn said he hopes the fellowship will bring attention – and funding – to both projects.

“It’s a costly process,” he said, noting independent testing for both BDA-12 and Zapp is the next step. “We need money for that, so we’re currently looking for funding.”

Uncomfortably numb to pain-free

BDA-12 has passed the FDA’s first phase – animal studies and other trials that prove its value and a lack of toxic reactions – and Abrahmsohn hopes to combine the final two phases: proving it works and conducting the final clinical trials.

Then, “We hope to get this on the market in the next two or three years,” Abrahmsohn said.

Use would likely start in his own field – dentistry – but the applications go far beyond: new moms could be up and about with their babies sooner after BDA-12 reverses the numbing of an epidural, for example; and anyone who had an incision or cutting procedure could go back to work sooner with no pain and no debilitating numbness.

In dentistry, Abrahmsohn noted, BDA-12 has been shown to bring back full sensation much quicker: for example, in 15-20 minutes



Photo courtesy Dr. Glenn Abrahmsohn

Dr. Glenn Abrahmsohn, owner of Dental Connection, earned a fellowship from the International Academy for Dental Facial Esthetics in recognition of his work on two game-changing medications. He is currently working toward FDA approval for the products.

in the tongue, which now takes three to five hours. “It turns off that awful feeling of numbness and turns on the post-operative painkiller – but it’s a painkiller without nausea, vomiting and other side effects,” he said.

That means more procedures could be done on an outpatient basis and patients can get out of the hospital quicker, reducing costs.

Abrahmsohn calls it a “fitting tribute” to his late son, remembering how the two tested BDA-12 together, much to Brett’s fascination, and how he told his son about a professor who said anyone who invented a way to reverse local anesthesia would get a Nobel Prize.

“I said, ‘Bretty, we’re going for the Nobel on this,’” Abrahmsohn said.

Preventing pain and infection

Zapp is just as much a family affair – one that includes Abrahmsohn’s extended family of Key Biscayne Dental Connection patients.

Abrahmsohn developed the product a quarter of a century ago, and one of its biggest testers and fans is his mom, who he describes as “a very pretty lady in her 80s” who lives in Palm Beach and enjoys visits to her son’s Key Biscayne home courtesy of the driving skills of her boyfriend who, literally, is a rocket scientist.

During some of Zena’s and her retired NASA engineer’s trips to the Key, she sees her son for dental work. Along the way, Abrahmsohn created Zapp as a treatment for

periodontal disease, and found it to be effective at easing his mom’s pain and preventing infection after procedures.

Over the years, he has also offered the product to other Dental Connection clients who signed consent agreements. “They’ve been very happy with it. Whenever there’s a procedure I do that could hurt or there’s a chance of infection, I use it. A lot of people have benefitted from it.”

Abrahmsohn said patients have been impressed by Zapp’s painkilling ability and infection-preventing powers, which he is looking to prove as effective against bacteria, fungi and viruses. He also hopes to show the product is effective at improving healing.

Fellowship will help

The anecdotal effectiveness of Zapp and BDA-12 led to the IADFE fellowship.

After Abrahmsohn demonstrated BDA-12 during an American Society for Dental Aesthetics lecture and successfully used Zapp for a colleague who was visiting the Key and started feeling unwell, leaders at the IADFE heard about the products.

That prompted the organization to offer the fellowship, which Abrahmsohn hopes will help lead to the funding he needs to move forward – i.e. take the anecdotal to the scientifically proven.

He noted both products still must pass independent tests to get FDA approval, and he hopes the time will come soon so they can be used in the dental, medical and veterinary trades. “We want to get through the FDA process as soon as possible so it can be used to help people,” he said.

BRIDGE

Wednesday Matinee Bridge

In action Wednesday, December 16, first place went to the team of Joan Ambrose and Monica Deeks. Bob Simons and Judy Reinach were in second, followed by Rita Craft and Bob Knecht in third place.

There was a tie for fourth between the teams of Savio Sequeira and Tony McGill and Ann and Larry Ainslie.

Wednesday Matinee Bridge meets at 12:30 p.m. at the Key Biscayne Community

Center. Call Judy Reinach at 305-361-9562 for information.

Towers Bridge

On Thursday, December 17, Helen White and Beatrice Del Coral took first place. Michelle Rodriguez and Briec Claire were second, and Tony McGill and Savio Sequeira were third.

There will be no game next week or the week after due to the Christmas Eve and New Year’s Eve holidays.



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