Lab Meeting Schedule

- **When:** December 7  
  Where: Salk 403  
  Topic: TGFA-IRF6  
  Interaction in the etiology of non-syndromic oral clefts: genetic and biological evidence  
  Presenter: Ariadne Letra

- **When:** January 4, 2008  
  Topic: AXIN2 is Associated with Orofacial Cleft Birth Defects in Families with Positive Family History of Cancer  
  Presenter: Renato Silva

- **When:** January 18, 2008  
  Topic: Studies with PDGFC and Clefts  
  Presenter: Sowmya Narayanan

Lab News


Published by the International and American Associations for Dental Research, the Journal of Dental Research currently holds the top impact factor for all dental journals worldwide at 3.475. The Vieira Lab publication has also been highlighted in the “NIDCR News In Brief.” In addition to the many important observations made, this paper has also called to the attention of the scientific community that the improper formation of the lateral incisor in the opposite side of the clefts may suggest incomplete forms of bilateral clefts of the lip.

Unilateral cleft lip with alteration of the upper lateral incisor of the opposite side could mean an incomplete bilateral clefts.

Dental Registry and DNA Repository News

The Dental Registry and DNA Repository (DRDR) has a new total of 626 participants and only 78 declines, yielding a very high success rate for recruitment efforts. This means that 87.5% of patients seeking treatment here at the School of Dental Medicine are willing to help by donating 10 minutes of their time and a small amount of saliva towards helping future dental research initiatives.

Currently there are several projects being conducted under the “blanket” IRB approval of the DRDR. One of these projects is a pilot study, which utilizes clinical lip print photographs taken with a specialized camera. The study of lip prints, known as cheiloscopy, is significant because each person’s lip prints are unique in much the same way each person’s finger prints are unique.

Dr. Katherine Neiswanger, a research assistant professor at the University of Pittsburgh, is conducting the lip print project based on preliminary data pointing to evidence which suggests that a certain type of lip print coincides with the prevalence of cleft lip and palate. Dr. Neiswanger will test 20 lip print photos to see how they compare to actual lip prints in order to determine the reliability of such clinical photos. If the project is a success, a cost-effective and revolutionary means for scoring lip prints will be born.

The diverse nature of Dr. Neiswanger’s project demonstrates that many types of initiatives can be studied by utilizing the vast resources of the DRDR. If you have an idea for a project or if you would like to become involved as a DRDR volunteer, please contact Jill Schaefer at (412) 383-5944 or at jss73@dental.pitt.edu

For newsletter questions, comments or suggestions please e-mail Melissa Carp at mgc4@dental.pitt.edu