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## Dental DNA bank starts up at UOP

Posted Jan. 23, 2007

By Jennifer Garvin

*Pittsburgh*—The University of Pittsburgh School of Dental Medicine has pioneered a new approach to clinical research with its Dental Registry and DNA Repository—possibly the world's first dental DNA bank.

The program, which started the initial collection of cases in September 2006, seeks clinical information and a biological sample from those seeking treatment at the dental school. Patients who sign up are asked for saliva samples and permission to look at their medical and dental charts for use in future research projects.

The project, which has 200 registrants, is the brainchild of Dr. Alexandre Vieira, the program's director and a professor of oral biology at the school.

Dr. Vieira said he believes the project is "revolutionary" because "it eliminates the need for further institutional review board evaluations for projects seeking to use data from the registry."

Any time a research project deals with human subjects or identifiable information from humans, the project must be evaluated and approved by the local institutional review board or ethics in human research committee, said Dr. Vieira.

This project was designed so that any future investigation using data or samples from the registry will not be classified as human research since researchers will not be in touch with the subjects. In other words, he said, participants are protected beyond the regular standards because their samples are blind to the investigators.

"Furthermore, it allows the clinical faculty to engage in research activities and to increase the external funding for research at the School of Dental Medicine."

"We have 85 percent compliance—the majority of people we approached to participate in the study said yes," he said.

For more information, visit [www.dental.pitt.edu/vieira\\_lab/dental\\_registry.php](http://www.dental.pitt.edu/vieira_lab/dental_registry.php)

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