



Endodontic errors

Dear Colleagues,

The summer is slowly fading away – a certain sign for that you are holding the autumn issue of *ENDO-Endodontic Practice Today* in your hand. I hope you had a great vacation and have had an opportunity to recover and gain strength for forthcoming duties.

When you leaf through this new issue you will certainly be drawn to the paper by Heppeler and Hülsmann on the prevalence of root canal fillings, apical periodontitis and endodontic treatment needs in Germany. These remarkable and perhaps frightening data are in agreement with other previously published results^{1,2}. These studies have shown – and our clinical experiences corroborate these findings – that root canal treatment is commonly associated with errors and defects. Up to one-third to half of all root canal treated teeth show radiographic signs of apical periodontitis. Moreover, when considering the technical quality of the root canal treatments, these values are getting even worse – radiographic assessment indicates heterogeneities in the root canal filling in 60% of cases, including over- and under-filled root canals and/or unfilled canals.

Thus, there is a marked discrepancy between the potential of root canal treatment as demonstrated in controlled clinical studies and the clinical reality (at least in Germany and Western Europe) of ortho-grade root canal treatment. This discrepancy should be incentive for our daily practice to provide the best possible treatment to our patients based on the current best evidence. Don't be afraid, we as endodontists will certainly have enough to do in the future – maybe in most cases it will be retreatments!

Enjoy this issue of *ENDO-Endodontic Practice Today*.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Schäfer'.

Edgar Schäfer

1. Jimenez-Pizón A, Segura-Egea JJ, Poyato-Ferrera M, Velasco-Ortega E, Rios-Santos JV. Prevalence of apical periodontitis and frequency of root-filled teeth in an adult Spanish population. *Int Endod J* 2004;37:167-173.
2. Eriksen HM, Kirkevang LL, Petersson K: Endodontic epidemiology and treatment outcome: general consideration. *Endodontic Topics* 2002;2:1-9.