

## **The preservation of health: Managing carbohydrate intake for life**

MA Falco. Pittsburgh: Dorrance Publishing, 2002.  
200 pp. Price: \$15.95 (softcover)

*The preservation of health* is a fascinating book and the fact that it was written by a dentist makes me very proud. I felt very comfortable with Dr. Falco's style, although at times—for example, when he goes into detail about the body's chemistry—the subject matter became hard to follow.

Dr. Falco begins the book by presenting a generic family, tracking the husband's eating habits for a day and outlining the impact on his health. From there, the author builds the book around the concept that the family's eating habits are directly related to what happens to their health.

In the second chapter, Dr. Falco chronicles the development of the demand for sugar, beginning with the processing of corn syrup, and illustrates how sugar has become big business and an integral part of the world's economy. Dr. Falco notes that sugar consumption began to rise significantly in the 1950's, fueled by the fact that it could be used to keep food from spoiling, it was cheap, and it was and is addictive.

The next chapters involve very detailed discussions about how the body handles both simple and complex carbohydrates. Some of this discussion is quite technical and may not be appropriate for the general public. These chapters also identify common foods and the sugar, fiber, and total carbohydrates found in each. Finally, this section examines individual nutrients and vitamins, describing where they are found and how much of each should be consumed. This section is a valuable resource.

Dr. Falco does an admirable job writing about caries and periodontal diseases, presenting ideas and information about biochemistry that should be read and contemplated by all dentists. By focusing on things that dentists see every day and don't notice and the evidence those signs provide in support of a specific course of treatment, Dr. Falco expresses how what's happening in the mouth truly is a mirror for what's happening in the rest of the body and hints that the dental profession could do more to help people to be healthy and avoid catastrophic diseases.

The last chapters address the integral part sugar plays in the development and progression of many chronic diseases and conditions, including asthma, depression, osteoporosis, heart disease, and diabetes.

Although the author could use more references, *The preservation of health* still is a good source of information for those individuals who seek to improve their health through nutrition. I would recommend it to dentists and members of the medical profession as well as to the general public.

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## **Dental ethics at chairside: Professional principles and practical applications**

DT Ozar, DJ Sokol. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2002. 343 pp. Price: \$42.50 (softcover).

The dental profession is challenged every day by new and complex issues that require sound and ethical decision-making. While the corporate world is riddled with scandals of insider trading and illegal accounting practices, dentistry must stand above the fray and uphold its trusted reputation with the American public. The second edition of *Dental ethics at chairside* is timely, informative, and thought-provoking, a must-read for all dentists.

The book's framework is well-constructed; the first part provides an excellent foundation for discussing the specific ethical issues presented in the second part. Appropriately, the authors point out that ethical decisions are based on judgment, a combination of an individual's experience and the experience of others. They also maintain that there is no magic formula for making ethical decisions; rather, there is a need to establish an accepted standard of behavior between dentists and the communities they serve.

The authors describe nine categories of professional obligation that every dentist should understand. Through this process of learned discernment, moral decisions are made; the habits people learn influence the choices they make and the ways in which they act. This book provides clinicians with valuable tools, allowing them to look introspectively and examine the way habits are shaped while also giving them the opportunity either to act more ethically or to confirm current actions as ethical.

The presentation of the Interactive Model is very helpful in depicting a positive and beneficial relationship between dentist and patient. This model emphasizes values, communication, and autonomy, provided the patient's capacity is not compromised. The authors correctly observe that without an effective and interactive dentist-patient relationship, the true meaning of "informed consent" cannot be established.

As dental practitioners, it is important to continually evaluate skills, new techniques, materials, and so forth; we also must continue to evaluate the reasons behind the decisions we make. The authors discuss and rank the central values of dental practice. At first, this seems basic and intuitive; however, after reading through some of the cases and applications, the listing of central values provides the building blocks that allow a dentist to evaluate and make decisions for practically every patient. The authors emphasize the patient's autonomy and cite several excellent examples of how that autonomy is incorporated into the decision-making process.

Several outstanding case examples are used throughout the book to help the reader learn how to respond and make judgments while considering the professional obligations that are expected of a dentist. The Model of Professional-Ethical Decision Making is most helpful in allowing readers to evaluate various options and arrive at the appropriate decisions proposed by the various cases. Like all adults, dentists have certain habitual patterns of ethics; by presenting individual cases and evaluation models, the authors help to facilitate professional and ethical conduct in dentistry.