

0052 Emerging Infections in the Asia/Pacific Region: Clinical and Research Perspectives

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Microbes are ubiquitous and new variants emerge incessantly. They cause notable diseases in their wake, recent Asian examples being SARS, corona virus infection and the bird flu. These together with other rampant emerging or re-emerging infections such as HIV-disease, multi-drug resistant tuberculosis, prion diseases and a multitude of drug resistance infections challenge the practice of dentistry in many ways. First, they present in myriad different guises confounding the unwary clinician. A classic example is HIV infection, which presents with protean manifestations in all organ systems including the oro-facial region. Second, these diseases have led the dental community to strict regimentation, and constant review of infection control procedures. Third, drug resistant infections, in particular have led researchers worldwide to review the communal mechanisms by which organism behave in the form of biofilm infections. Finally, these diseases have led to the review of ethical and legal obligations associated with provision of dental care for the infected patient. This presentation will outline the multitude of emerging infections in the Asia Pacific region we are witnessing today and highlight the clinical and research challenges they pose to the dental community.

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9:00 AM-10:00 AM, Tuesday, 27 September 2005 Millennium Hotel Galaxy I-II

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