

Dean's Page

Dear colleagues in dentistry:

Have you heard the news? The UT Dental Branch has been making international headlines this year for advances in salivary diagnostics. Three of our researchers – Dr. Charles Streckfus, Dr. William Dubinsky and Dr. Lenora Bigler – co-authored a small study published in January that identified 49 specific protein biomarkers in saliva that correlate to the presence of breast cancer, benign tumors or to the absence of either.

Larger studies are under way, but the implications of this research are profound as we enter a new era of dentistry. It's a time when the mouth is increasingly recognized as an ideal site for diagnosing all kinds of diseases – even in different parts of the body – in a non-invasive, highly accurate way. In this era of personalized medicine, how exciting for dentistry that saliva is receiving considerable attention as a way to identify important diseases.

The potential impact of this saliva test for identifying breast cancer proteins using the UT technology could be significant for early disease detection. Considering that a host of other researchers in the U.S. are also working hard to establish saliva as a diagnostic tool, innovations might come sooner to our practices than we ever thought possible.

When they do, will you be ready?

Because breakthroughs are occurring on an almost daily basis, continuing education is more important than ever. At the UT Dental Branch, we're committed to making sure you'll have the course offerings you need, when you need them.

Ultimately, new technology will advance our profession and dramatically improve our patients' quality of life. You can be assured the UT Dental Branch will keep you up-to-date.

Sincerely,



Catherine M. Flaitz, D.D.S., M.S.

Dean

William N. Finnegan, III, Professorship in the Dental Sciences