

Healthy Teeth Under Attack



Pamela DenBesten

Professor, Pediatric Dentistry & Orofacial Sciences

CURRENT RESEARCH

How damage to our teeth may also be affecting our brains

Maintaining oral health is a key indicator of overall health and wellbeing. In fact, research suggests that the health of the mouth reflects the condition of the body as a whole. Dr. Pamela DenBesten, Professor of Pediatric Dentistry in the Department of Orofacial Sciences at the University of California, San Francisco, is focused on improving children's oral health. As the director of the newly founded Center for Children's Oral Health Research, which focuses on studies related to dental caries prevention, the epigenetic effects of the environment on tooth formation and oral health, tooth tissue biomineralization, and oral health policy and education, Dr. DenBesten plays an active role in the dentistry community in advancing the research behind practice. Dr. DenBesten's research interests include the use of stem cells in tooth regeneration as well as the causes and treatment of amelogenesis imperfecta, a disorder of tooth development.

However, Dr. DenBesten's longstanding research interest also focuses on the impact of fluoride on human health. To prevent dental disease, especially in children, it is important to understand the factors that are involved in the formation of tooth decay. Risk factors include high sugar diets but also some less obvious factors like environmental stress and tooth structure. To combat these risk factors, dentists often use fluoride. However, fluoride can affect tooth cells negatively. Dr. DenBesten is investigating whether fluoride can similarly alter other cells in the body, including the cells of the brain. Therefore, her research, although fundamental in nature, addresses important questions about society's health and wellbeing.

Current research...

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AFFILIATION



University Of California, San Francisco

EDUCATION

- B.S., in Chemistry, 1976 , St. Olaf College
- D.D.S., 1980 , University of Iowa
- M.S., 1982 , University of North Carolina

AWARDS

- American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, Diplomate, 2003
- International Association for Dental Research, IADR Distinguished Scientist Award, Pulp Biology and Regeneration, 2009
- Faculty Research Lecturer Award, UCSF School of Dentistry, 2011
- Fellow, American Association for the Advancement of Sciences, 2012
- National Advisory Dental and Craniofacial Research Council, 2010-2014, Member

RESEARCH AREAS

Life Science, Neurological / Cognitive, Regenerative Medicine, Neurological / Cognitive

FUNDING REQUEST

Your contributions will support the continued research of Dr. Pamela DenBesten, at the University of California, San Francisco, as she addresses important questions about the global community's dental health. Donations will fund the necessary \$250-350K/year required for personnel, supplies, and equipment. Her basic research is necessary to developing the understanding to prevent oral disease. Be a part of research that makes a difference; support Dr. DenBesten.