Come to IFDAS in Nara, Japan

The 15th Triennial International Dental Congress on Anesthesia, Sedation and Pain Control by the International Federation of Dental Anesthesia Societies (IFDAS) will take place October 5–7, 2018, in Nara, Japan. If you are interested in seeing the wide range of sedation and anesthesiology societies that make up the IFDAS, you need only look at the bottom of the preceding page to this editorial. As *Anesthesia Progress* is the official journal of the IFDAS, this up-to-date list highlights the worldwide interest in sedation and anesthesiology in dentistry.

Although all the IFDAS meetings are wonderful opportunities to meet with dentists from all over the world involved in this special area of dental practice, a meeting in Japan is a particularly unique event. Japan is one of only 3 countries in the world that routinely allows dentists to provide general anesthesia. Of course, the other 2 are Canada and the United States. Although there are a number of dentist anesthesiologists in the United States providing general anesthesia in hospitals, the majority of dentist anesthesiologists and oral and maxillofacial surgeons (OMFSs) provide deep sedation/general anesthesia in the office setting. Further, only a handful of dental schools in North America have formal departments/divisions of dental anesthesiology. In contrast, all dental schools in Japan have dedicated departments of dental anesthesiology and most have postgraduate residencies/PhD programs in dental anesthesiology. No doubt this has developed because dental anesthesiology has long been a recognized specialty within the dental profession in Japan and is one of only 4 dental specialties recognized by the federal government.

Even more interesting for those of us in North America is that most of these dental schools have their own dedicated dental hospitals managed by dental anesthesiologists (how dentist anesthesiologists are referred to in Japan) where patients can be admitted following surgery for overnight or longer stays. Following orthognathic surgery, for instance, many patients remain inpatients for days or weeks. Many of these dental hospitals also have intensive care units for managing patients who require intubation postoperatively, such as following head and neck cancer surgery provided by OMFSs. These units are comanaged by OMFSs and dental anesthesiologists.

It was not long ago that almost all Japanese patients were admitted at least for an overnight stay following general anesthesia. This practice began to change within the last couple of decades. One of the highlights of my career was hosting several young Japanese dental anesthesiology faculty at The Ohio State University in the mid-'90s, where I taught at the time with Dr Joel Weaver. We showed these young faculty our ambulatory anesthetic techniques with various dental, oral, and maxillofacial surgeries in various settings. And how we discharged patients to home after 30 minutes for the shorter procedures! In a small way, this encounter helped to stimulate the practice of ambulatory anesthesia in Japan. Since that time, I have visited Japan a number of times and many of my Japanese dental anesthesiology colleagues continue to visit me here in the States as we share our techniques and friendships.

This IFDAS meeting will be held in conjunction with the 11th Annual Meeting of the Federation of Asian Dental Anesthesiology Societies as well as the 46th Annual Meeting of the Japanese Dental Society of Anesthesiology, which is a very high-level educational meeting. Many presentations will, however, be in Japanese so most of us will not be able to fully appreciate the content. But there will be many posters and abstracts, as well as the entire IFDAS meeting, in English.

Also of interest is the venue of Nara, Japan. Most people have heard of Kyoto, the former imperial capital of Japan for over 1000 years through the mid-1800s, when the capital moved to Tokyo. It is a must-see location with incredible beauty and history. This meeting is in the city of Nara, in Nara Prefecture, which is adjacent to Kyoto Prefecture. Nara was also a capital of Japan in the Nara period, from 710 to 794. There are many, many beautiful sites there and it has been designated a United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization World Heritage Site so it is sure to have much splendor to offer. I look forward to sightseeing in this beautiful region of Japan.

Please consider visiting Nara and joining me at the IFDAS Congress. It will be an outstanding experience.

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