Scenes from Thursday

- It's a bright shiny day at the Sinclair Dental booth (No. 727) where team members are handing out yellow roses.

- Donny Chan and Esah Yip at the Malaysian Rubber Export Promotion Council booth (No. 345).

- Hygienist Allison Ransier, left, and dental assistant Marianne Beckett stopped to map out their plans for the day.

- PDC staff member Kristie Ritter at registration with daisies chosen to match the colour of this year's PDC theme.

- Jennifer Murphy, Chadi Saade and Sara Jean Louis, at the Dental Savings Club booth (No. 1329).

- Arlene MacKinnon flashes a smile at the Shofu booth (No. 1430) while Dan Christensen (brown jacket) discusses product details with booth visitors.

- The GSK booth (No. 835) with a lively crowd of visitors on Thursday.

- Barbara Cox at the Hands-On Training Institute booth (No. 552).

- Jim Ball discusses technical details at the Instrumentarium booth (No. 1247).

Photos by Robin Goodman, 'today' staff
stressors and require different equipment and recommendations. Certain armrests, delivery systems, operator layouts, HVE options, patient positioning techniques and exercises are more appropriate for hygienists than dentists and vice-versa.

**Are you seeing any new trends in ergonomic problems in dentistry?**

Yes. Recently I have seen an increase in two problems. First, in both my in-office consultations and at the dental school, I have seen an increase in the percentage of dental professionals and students with neck/back pain that is likely related to the use of non-ergonomic dental loupes. Most dentists and hygienists do not realize that loupes with poor declination angles can actually create or worsen pain. In Friday’s (Neck, Back & Beyond) seminar, I will discuss the three criteria for selecting loupes that I developed specifically to correct the painful muscle imbalances of dental professionals, based on current research.

**What are dental professionals doing wrong when trying to manage their pain?**

From my experience, those who give them the same routine they give everyone else; or they buy exercise DVDs designed for the general public. This can worsen their unique imbalances and create more pain. In Saturday’s (Fitness 101) seminar, I will be teaching an exercise program that I developed specifically to correct the painful muscle imbalances of dental professionals, based on current research.

**How important are ergonomic/fitness habits away from the practice in supporting optimum health at work?**

Extremely important. A combination of aerobic, flexibility and strengthening should be addressed. While most dental professionals realize that they should target the “stabilizing” or “postural” muscles in an exercise routine, most don’t realize that how they strengthen them is just as critical. In the Fitness 101 program, I will introduce the supportive research for the technique of muscular endurance training for dental professionals, as well as an exercise routine.

Also, because of their predisposition to unique muscle imbalances, certain exercises that dental professionals think are targeting the “correct” muscles simultaneously engage the tight, short and ischemic muscles that should not be strengthened.

Generic exercise routines, such as Pilates, need to be modified specifically for dental professionals to prevent the possibility of worsening of imbalances in the neck/shoulder.

We will also discuss which exercises and gym machines can actually worsen your health.

**What’s the main thing you want attendees to take away from your sessions?**

Pain is not a necessary by-product of dentistry. With current, accurate research-based interventions, most team members can learn to prevent, manage and reduce work-related discomfort or injury.

Dozens of dental professionals have emailed me after these lectures and informed me that they are either pain-free or significantly improved!