“Soft Bones and Teeth: A Tale of Osteomalacia (with a happy ending)”

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Dr. Marc McKee
Associate Dean Research, Faculty of Dentistry Department of Anatomy and Cell Biology, Faculty of Medicine Medical Scientist, MUHC, Department of Medicine.

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Professor and Interim Chair Endodontics, Pediatric Dentistry, Dental Research. University of North Carolina.

Ms. Deborah Sittig
Founder of SoftBones.org (patient support group and mother of a child with hypophosphatasia).

Brief summary: Osteomalacias/rickets – skeletal and dental diseases presenting with soft bones and teeth – are rare maladies that are typically most severe in children. They are characterized by bone deformities and fractures, as well as by the fracture, infection and sometimes loss of fragile teeth having thin dentin. The diseases are also often accompanied by muscle weakness, and local and diffuse body pain. For multiple reasons, osteomalacia patients have inadequate mineralization of their bones and teeth, leading to malfunction, pain and even death. This workshop will specifically address two osteomalacic diseases – hypophosphatasia and hypophosphatemia. Indeed, one of the largest concentrations of hypophosphatasia patients in the world is the Mennonite population here in Canada in the Winnipeg (Manitoba) region. On a very positive note, an enzyme replacement therapy for hypophosphatasia – developed largely in Montreal and now with “breakthrough status” being granted by the Food & Drug Administration (USA) based on the remarkable outcomes of its clinical trials – is likely to be on the market in 2015/2016.

In this research workshop, the basic and clinical science underlying our understanding and treatment of these two diseases will be presented and discussed by three experts renowned for their fundamental science and clinical research on the osteomalacias. Also joining this workshop as a participant, to describe the patient/family experience of living with osteomalacia, will be the founder of the Soft Bones Foundation who is also the mother of a child with hypophosphatasia receiving treatment with the new enzyme-replacement therapy.

Friday, 27th March, 9 am - noon, followed by a light lunch.
Rm. M48, Strathcona Anatomy & Dentistry Building, 3640 University Street
Montreal, Quebec

Moderator: Dr. Richard Hovey, PhD, Associate Professor, Oral Health and Society, Faculty of Dentistry, McGill University.

All are welcome.

Host: Dr. Marc McKee at (marc.mckee@mcgill.ca)