

1 **Title:** Occupational exposure of dentists to extreme-low-frequency magnetic field

2 **Running head:** Magnetic field exposure of dentists

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21 **Abstract**

22 *Objective:* To compare occupational exposure to extremely-low-frequency magnetic field (ELF-MF) between dentists
23 practicing in dental clinics and those employed in hospitals.

24 *Methods:* Thirty-two dentists who worked at clinics ($n=15$) and 33 dentists employed at hospital dental departments
25 ($n=7$) voluntarily provided their informed consent to participate in this measurement study. The study dentists were
26 requested to wear an ELF-MF dosimeter for some 3 hours at work to determine their personal exposure. Spot
27 measurements taken at a number of locations in each dental office were used to indicate work environmental^{the}
28 exposure level. Additionally, ELF-MF emitted from common dental equipments[^] was also measured. All
29 measurements were performed ^{with} ~~by using~~ EMDEX Lite meters.

30 *Results:* The average environmental exposure to ELF-MF is higher in clinic dental office^{~s} than in hospital dental
31 department (0.55 ~~micro-Tesla~~ ^{~s} μT) vs 0.15 μT , $p=0.008$). Personal dosimetry showed that ^{on} in average, clinic dentists
32 ~~had~~ ^{spent} 35.71 % and 19.39% of time ^{their at exposures} ~~spent~~ above 0.3 μT and 0.4 μT at work, respectively. The corresponding figures
33 for hospital dentists were 19.61% and 13.92%. Additionally, ELF-MF was greater than 0.4 μT at 30 cm from all
34 selected equipments[^], but the ELF-MF generally diminished as the distance from dental equipments[^] increased.
35 Ultraviolet air sterilization system^{~s} produced 3 times ^{as much} ~~higher~~ ELF-MF ^{as} ~~than~~ other dental equipments[^].

36 *Conclusions:* This study suggests ^{the} ~~a~~ possibility of over-exposure of dentists to power frequency ELF-MF. Additionally,
37 certain dental equipments[^] may produce ELF-MF levels greater than 0.4 μT in areas where dentists usually ^{work} ~~stay~~ when
38 treating patients.

39 Key words: dentist; extremely-low-frequency; electromagnetic fields; exposure assessment; occupational hazards

40 **Introduction**

41 While epidemiologic evidence tends to indicate an association between residential exposure to
42 extremely-low-frequency magnetic field (ELF-MF) of 0.4 (micro-Tesla) μT or higher and increased risk of childhood
43 leukemia, the World Health Organization monograph published in 2007 suggested that the possibilities of other
44 health consequences in relation to ELF-MF exposure have not been ruled out¹⁾, which called for more research in
45 recent years. In 2010, Kroll et al. reported an increased (14% for leukemia and 34% for other cancer) but insignificantly
46 estimated relative risk of childhood cancer for each 0.2- μT increase in magnetic field²⁾. Additionally, a German
47 case-control study in 2010 also looked into the association between parental occupational exposure to ELF-MF and
48 childhood cancer³⁾. Moreover, Gobba et al. examined natural killer (NK) activity in 52 workers exposed to different
49 levels of ELF-MF during various activities. In higher exposed workers, the study observed a trend to reduce NK activity
50 compared to low exposed, but the difference was not significant⁴⁾.

51 Concerns have been raised about occupational ELF-MF exposure for electrical workers, and many blue-collar
52 workers, because they are more likely than other workers to use high power electrical equipments⁵⁾. Very few studies
53 have focused on survey of ELF-MF in health care workers, who also have potential for ELF-MF exposure owing to their
54 proximity to certain medical facilities during work period. In a study that assessed low frequency magnetic field
55 exposures in a hospital, striking variance was found for onsite measurements of magnetic flux density (0.08 μT - 6.5
56 μT) and in workers' time-weighted average (TWA) exposures (0.12 μT - 1.04 μT)⁶⁾. A later study conducted in a
57 pharmacy of a medical center observed average magnetic flux density between 0.06 μT and 0.22 μT , and full-shift
58 TWA exposure of 0.50 μT and 0.65 μT for two pharmacists, respectively⁷⁾. A much lower personal ELF-MF
59 exposure, TWA arithmetic means lower than 0.12 μT , has been reported for other health workers, including
60 physiotherapists, occupational therapists, physicians, nurses and medical radiographers^{8,9)}. Possible explanations for
61 the marked discrepancy in field ELF-MF intensities and personal exposure levels of health workers found among
62 studies may include different types and models of medical facilities and equipment operated by health care workers.
63 However, biased estimates due to a small sample size, and different strategies of sampling and measurements can not
64 be entirely ruled out for the reported discrepancy in ELF-MF encountered by health care workers.

65 Exposure to ELF-MF at during work period as compared to other activities has been reported to be the highest in

66 daily overall exposure^{8,9}). In an earlier report, Bohay et al. examined some potential sources and intensities of 60 Hz
67 magnetic fields produced in the dental environment¹⁰. The magnetic fields associated with various dental equipment
68 including ultrasonic scalers, amalgamators, composite light curing units, X-ray view boxes and chair lights were
69 measured. The median 60 Hz field strengths varied among the different types of equipment tested, ranging from
70 0.12 to 0.22 μT . In view of recent concerns ~~with respect to~~ ^{about} the possible effects of magnetic fields, the study by Bohay
71 et al. suggested that exposures be minimized and the concept of prudent avoidance be employed¹⁰. Additionally, the
72 UK Adult Brain Tumour Study examined 79 individuals and 25 companies for occupational and non-occupational
73 exposures to ELF-MF. The results showed occupational exposure to be the main determinant of overall exposure.
74 The highest average occupational exposures were found for security officers (0.78 μT), secretaries (0.48 μT) and
75 dentists (0.42 μT)⁸. Moreover, a recent survey reported ELF-MF of individuals from 117 different occupations.
76 Average exposure was significantly higher at work than at home. The average occupational exposures for dentists
77 (geometric mean (GM)=0.29 μT), and dental nurses (GM=0.24 μT) were comparable to the exposures experienced
78 by electricians ^{and} electrical fitters (GM=0.29 μT), but higher than personal assistants and secretaries (GM=0.10 μT),
79 nurses (GM=0.08 μT), and software professionals (GM=0.09 μT). The survey was also conducted in three dentist's
80 rooms, in the same practice building, and indicated that differing levels of exposure could be explained by alternative
81 positioning of ELF-MF sources within the rooms⁹. Despite ~~potential for overexposure to ELF-MF in dentists,~~ ^{dentists'} the
82 ELF-MF intensity in dental settings has not been adequately documented^{5, 6, 11}). Also, information on personal
83 exposure to ELF-MF ~~in dentists has been~~ ^{is} scarce. This report was therefore conducted to further assess occupational
84 exposure ~~of dentists~~ ^{~s} to ELF-MF. ^{dentists'}

85 This study aimed to obtain profile of ELF-MF exposure of dentists. ~~Additionally, in~~ ^{~s} Taiwan, dentists usually
86 practice in either hospitals or dental clinics, and these two settings are very dissimilar in areas. ^{floor of} The space ~~for~~ dental
87 clinics is usually limited; therefore the density of dental equipment, sources of ELF-MF, ~~is~~ ^{was} expected to be higher in
88 clinics than in the dental departments of hospitals. ^{Accordingly, we} We separately assessed the ELF-MF exposure ~~for dentists from~~ ^{~s of in}
89 these two settings. Moreover, we not only performed personal ELF-MF exposure measurements using personal
90 dosimeters, but also performed onsite measurements of ELF-MF intensities in work ~~places where dentists usually stay~~ ^{areas}
91 ~~while treating~~ patients. ELF-MF intensities emitted ~~from~~ ^{by} some common dental equipment were also determined.
92 Determination of environmental and personal exposures may be useful ~~in~~ ^{for} addressing dentists' overall occupational

94 **Materials and Methods**

95 *Study clinics, hospitals, and dentists*

96 Between June 2008 and February 2009, a convenient sample of 15 dental clinics and 7 hospitals in northern
97 Taiwan (Taipei City and Taipei County) were solicited for occupational exposure ~~of dentists~~ to ELF-MF. We started
98 our measurement work at a clinic just beside the Fu-Jen Catholic University, Taipei, Taiwan. This clinic has been
99 providing dental services for many Fu-Jen students and faculties. ~~With our request,~~ the first participating dentist
100 referred us to two of his friends, who are also dentists, for measurement ~~works~~ at their clinics. ~~Considering that the~~
101 research grant allows only some 60 dentists to be measured ~~in this research,~~ we continued the study dentists
102 solicitation process until 15 dental clinics agree to participate in this study. There were 39 dentists working in those
103 15 clinics and 32 (82%) agree to participate in our study. For hospital setting, we directly contacted 18 hospitals
104 located in the same and neighboring districts as Fu-Jen University, and 11 of them accepted our solicited visits for
105 measurement. Due to difficulties in time arrangement, we completed measurements in only 7 hospitals, where 33
106 (94.3%) out of 35 dentists were personally measured. Thirty-three dentists employed in the 7 hospitals and 32
107 dentists from the 15 participating clinics also provided their informed consents ~~for~~ personal dosimetry. The research
108 protocol ~~has been~~ reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board of Fu-Jen Catholic University, Taipei,
109 Taiwan.

110 *Personal dosimetry*

111 The dentists were scheduled to receive some 3 hours of personal dosimetry ~~of ELF-MF~~ during a dental
112 treatment session. After a brief instruction regarding how the personal measurements would proceed, each dentist
113 was requested to wear an EMDEX Lite (EnerTech Consultants, Campbell, California) on waist. In addition, one
114 dental assistant help completed a preformatted log-book recording the exact time of starting dental treatment, leaving
115 from and coming back while away from the dental office temporarily, and removing the dosimeter when the treatment
116 session was terminated. The dentists were asked to continuously wear the meter during the measurement period. The
117 investigators went to the dental office after the dental session was over to terminate the measurements and retrieved
118 the recorded data from dosimeters. Measurements were performed ~~by~~ standard EMDEX Lite meters. The

119 measurement accuracy was $\pm 2\%$ in the frequency band from 40 Hz to 1 kHz, and the sample rate was set at 4
120 seconds. All dosimeters were calibrated before ~~their~~ uses.

121 *Measurement of work environment*

122 The hospital dental department ~~is~~ ^{~s were} greater than the dental clinics in area. The number of dental chairs in each
123 dental department ranged from 3 to 10 with a mean \pm standard deviation (SD) of 8.43 ± 3.51 . The corresponding
124 figures for dental clinics were 1 to 6 and 3.13 ± 1.36 ($p=0.001$). An average number of 3.57 ± 1.72 hospital dentists and
125 1.67 ± 0.98 clinic dentists ($p=0.005$) were at work while measurements were conducted. The majority of clinics (66%)
126 and hospital dental departments (94%) were measured during the summer of 2008 (i.e., June to September, 2008).

127 We also used EMDEX Lite meters to measure onsite levels of environmental ELF-MF intensity. Treatment
128 areas and waiting areas were measured separately ~~in considering that~~ ^{since} dental equipment ~~are~~ ^{is} the main source of
129 ELF-MF in dental offices and ~~are~~ ^{is} usually located in treatment areas. For each waiting area, we selected the four
130 corners and a number of arbitrarily selected seats for measurements. For each treatment area, in addition to the four
131 corners, we also selected several locations frequently ~~accessed~~ ^{used} by dentists for measurements. All measurement
132 locations ~~must be~~ ^{were} 1 m ~~height from~~ ^{above} the floor and ~~must be~~ ^{the} at least 1 m from the wall to avoid influences ~~from~~ ^{of}
133 ~~electrical wiring~~ ^{the} ~~configured wires in the wall~~ ^{the}⁵⁾. Due to different sizes of dental offices, the number of measurements varied from 25 to
134 35.

135 *Measurement of dental equipment*

136 Four common dental equipments ^{pieces of} ~~including~~ dental chair unit, ultrasonic scaler, composite light curing unit,
137 and ultraviolet air sterilization system, were selected for measurements. ~~Selection of dental chairs was due to the fact~~ ^{The} ~~that they are the common~~ ^{were selected because} ELF-MF source ~~accessed by dentists. Selections of the other three equipments were due to~~
138 ~~their larger~~ ^{an} consumption of electricity. We performed the measurements ~~by~~ ^{common to all dentists, and} following the protocol proposed by the
139 IEEE for surveying controlled environment¹³⁾. The IEEE standard requires that measurements be collected at various
140 distances (e.g., 0, 10, 30, and 50 cm) from the ELF-MF sources. We measured ELF-MF at three locations ~~with~~ ^{at}
141 different heights above the ground, i.e., 30, 100 and 150 cm, to estimate the exposure ~~for~~ ^{of the} knee, waist, and hand,
142 respectively. ~~At~~ ^{At} each location, a total of 90 measurements were conducted within six minutes and a six-minute
143

144 averaging^e was calculated. We calculated the spatial average derived from the three series of measurements collected
145 over a vertical surface at 30, 100, and 150 cm above the ground. The spatial averaging^{was} is calculated as:

146
$$\left[\left(\sum_{i=1}^n x_i^2 \right) / n \right]^{1/2}$$

147 where x_i is the six-minute averaging^e magnetic field intensity¹⁴⁾.

148 *Statistical analysis*

149 Because the hospital dental departments are usually greater than the dental clinics in area, and may have more
150 dental equipments[/] in use simultaneously, dentists employed in hospitals and those who work in clinics may
151 experience different magnetic field intensity^{ies} level occupationally. ~~We thus decided to performed~~ ^{Thus, we} analyses for hospital
152 dentists and clinic dentists separately.

153 We first described ^{the} characteristics ~~between~~ ^{of} dentists employed in hospitals and clinic ~~dentists~~ ^{~s}. To account for ~~the~~
154 ~~non-~~ ^{a~}symmetric distributions[/] of magnetic field intensity, we calculated geometric mean (GM) and geometric standard
155 deviation (GSD), in addition to arithmetic mean (AM) and standard deviation (SD), to ~~well~~ ^{~s} summarize the exposure. ^{better}
156 The non-parametric Mann-Whitney U test was also used to compare the difference in mean exposure of both ^{~s}
157 environmental and personal measurements between hospital dentists and clinic dentists. A p value less than 0.05 ~~were~~ ^{was}
158 considered statistically significant. The statistically ~~analysis~~ ^{using} was performed ~~by~~ SAS 9.1 (SAS Institute, Cary, NC).

159 **Results**

160 *Personal exposure*

161 More than 60% ^{the} of study dentists were males. Hospital dentists were older than clinic dentists (46.00 ± 12.64 vs
162 37.25 ± 12.32 years). Due to availability, most hospital dentists were measured during morning treatment sessions,
163 whereas a large ~~amount~~ ^{number} of clinic dentists were measured in the evening. The mean duration of personal measurement
164 was similar for hospital and clinic dentists (3.07 ± 0.61 vs 3.04 ± 0.80 hours) (Table 1).

165 The average number of measurement ~~was~~ ^{~s were} similar for both hospital dentists (2766 ± 552) and clinic dentists
166 (2735 ± 720). The minimum and maximum exposure averaged over a treatment session ~~was~~ ^{~s} ~~0.06~~ ^{were} 0.06 and 0.90 μT , with
167 an AM of 0.24 ± 0.16 μT for hospital dentists. The corresponding figures for clinic dentists were $0.05 - 0.73$ μT and
168 0.28 ± 0.16 μT . The clinic dentists also had a higher mean percentage of time >0.3 μT (35.71% vs 19.61%) and a
169 higher mean percentage of time >0.4 μT (19.39% vs 13.92%) than hospital dentists, but ~~such~~ ^{these} differences were not
170 statistically significant. (Table 2)

171 *Environmental exposure*

172 ~~For~~ ^{At} each dental office, 25 to 35 on-site spot measurements were performed, with a mean number of
173 27.86 ± 9.89 and 28.33 ± 15.29 for clinics and hospital dental departments, respectively. Table 2 shows mean ^{the}
174 environmental ELF-MF intensity of dental offices. The minimum and maximum overall ELF-MF in hospital dental
175 departments was 0.07 μT and 1.30 μT , respectively. The corresponding figures for clinics were 0.13 μT and 5.03 μT .
176 The AM environmental exposure was higher, but ~~//~~ ^{not} significantly, in clinic dental office than in hospital dental
177 department ~~(0.49 ± 0.34 μT vs 0.25 ± 0.18 μT , $p=0.113$).~~ ^{~s} While ~~the~~ ^{this} analysis was limited to the measurements taken ~~at~~ ⁱⁿ
178 the treatment areas, we noted a significantly higher AM in clinic dental offices than in hospital dental departments
179 (0.55 ± 0.67 μT vs 0.15 ± 0.08 μT , $p=0.008$). On the other hand, similar ELF-MF exposure level ~~was~~ ^{~s were} noted in waiting
180 areas. ^{the}

181 *Magnetic field emitted from dental equipment*

variations in

182 Probably due to ~~dissimilar~~ age and model, we noted a substantial variation in maximum (i.e., taken at 0 cm
183 away from sources) ELF-MF among dental chairs (0.19 to 58.36 μT), with an AM and GM of $13.11 \pm 12.40 \mu\text{T}$ and
184 $8.09 \pm 0.33 \mu\text{T}$, respectively. The maximum ELF-MF for ultrasonic scaler also showed a substantial variation, with an
185 AM and GM of $48.25 \pm 5.91 \mu\text{T}$ and $7.01 \pm 1.96 \mu\text{T}$, respectively. The AM/GM of maximum ELF-MF for composite
186 light curing unit and ultraviolet air sterilization system ~~was~~ $19.15 \pm 16.93 \mu\text{T} / 5.43 \pm 1.75 \mu\text{T}$ and $23.77 \pm 11.87 \mu\text{T} /$
187 $22.23 \pm 0.17 \mu\text{T}$, respectively. But these figures were based on only 3 composite light curing units and 2 ultraviolet air
188 sterilization machines. (Table 4)

189 Table 4 also demonstrated ~~a~~ ^{s the} clear decreasing trend in ELF-MF as the distance from dental equipments ~~/~~
190 increased. The AM/GM for dental chair unit was $0.46 \pm 0.37 \mu\text{T} / 0.36 \pm 0.20 \mu\text{T}$ at 30 cm, which is the distance
191 dentists usually ~~stay~~ ^{keep} while treating patients. The corresponding figures for ultrasonic scaler were similar at 0.41 ± 0.37
192 $\mu\text{T} / 0.27 \pm 0.33 \mu\text{T}$, but were greater for composite light curing unit ($0.85 \pm 1.01 \mu\text{T} / 0.45 \pm 0.58 \mu\text{T}$) and ultraviolet
193 air sterilization system ($1.51 \pm 0.78 \mu\text{T} / 1.41 \pm 0.17 \mu\text{T}$).

194 Discussion

195 This study revealed that ~~in~~ ^{on} average, during treatment sessions hospital dentists spent 20% and 14% of time at
196 levels of ELF-MF exposure in excess of 0.3 μT and 0.4 μT , respectively; the corresponding figures for clinic dentists
197 were even higher. Moreover, the average ELF-MF intensity was greater than 0.4 μT at 30 cm from all dental
198 equipments, a distance that dentists usually ~~have~~ ^{keep} when performing treatments, suggesting potential over ^{exposure} of
199 ELF-MF for dentists while operating various dental equipments.

200 Previous occupational studies assessed ELF-MF exposures associated with various jobs including dentists and
201 dental nurses, using personal dosimeters⁸⁻¹¹. ~~The~~ ^A UK study⁸) reported that dentists had the third highest mean
202 exposure (time-weighted average [TWA], 0.42 μT) among various job titles, next to security officer (0.78 μT) and
203 secretary (0.48 μT). Workers with ~~the~~ ^{ies} other job titles had mean exposures not higher than 0.20 μT except for dental
204 nurses (0.30 μT). Personal ELF-MF exposure of dentists in our study was lower than that of UK dentists but higher
205 than that associated with most occupational titles.

206 Levels of ELF-MF in dental environments have been measured by type of and distance from dental equipments
207 in a few studies^{10,15}. One prior study¹⁰ ~~has~~ evaluated the ELF-MF intensities produced by ultrasonic scalers and light
208 curing units, which were also measured in our study. In line with our observations, the ELF-MF levels were higher
209 than 0.4 μT at 30 cm from both equipments ^{types of} when they were turned on. The intensity was generally consistent with
210 previous findings¹⁰. It is noteworthy that in our study, the ELF-MF level at 30 cm from ultraviolet air sterilization
211 system was 1.41 μT , more than 3 times higher than that from other dental ^{equipment} facilities; the ELF-MF intensity
212 moderately reduced to 0.9 μT at 50cm. Although limited in sample size, our observation ~~still~~ ^{~s} suggested that dentists
213 should ~~clude~~ ^{avoid} long-term operation of ultraviolet air sterilization system and stay away from ~~it~~ ^{~s} in order to ~~avoid over~~ ^{limit}
214 exposure to ELF-MF.

215 In this study, exposure level obtained from environmental measurements ~~was~~ ^{~s} similar to ~~that~~ ^{were} obtained ~~from~~ ^{those}
216 personal dosimetry ~~for~~ ^{of} hospital dentists (AM: 0.25 vs 0.24 μT). ~~But~~ ^{and} the environmental ELF-MF level at dental
217 offices was much higher than the level obtained ~~from~~ ⁱⁿ personal dosimetry of clinic dentists (AM: 0.49 vs 0.28 μT).
218 One of possible explanations is the difference in area ~~between~~ hospital dental departments and clinic dental offices.

219 **Dental clinic offices are usually** ~~The later ones usually are~~ limited in space and the environmental ELF-MF level is more likely affects ~~by certain~~ **therefore** ~~are~~
 220 sources of ELF-MF such as TV, computer, printer, air-conditioner and fan¹⁶. Air conditioners ~~were~~ **are** commonly used
 221 in summer ~~seasons~~ in Taiwan, and the highest levels of ELF-MF have been reported to occur in this season¹⁷. The
 222 much higher environmental ELF-MF intensity observed in dental clinic offices, relative to exposure levels of personal
 223 dosimetry of clinic dentists, might be because ~~at least to some extent, that~~ most of our survey was performed in
 224 summer ~~time~~. Moreover, we did not take into account the temporal variation of ELF-MF intensities in dental offices.
 225 Unlike ~~performing a~~ **the** 3-hour personal dosimetry ~~monitoring~~ **performed** for dentists, we performed only short-term field survey ~~of~~ **~s**
 226 ~~for~~ environmental exposure **in** which ~~recorded~~ 25 to 35 measurements of magnetic flux densities in each dental office. ~~^~~ **were made**
 227 Previous studies have reported temporal variation in ELF-MF intensity during an ~~8-hour~~⁷ and 24-hour period¹⁸. ~~^~~ **~s**
 228 Failure to take into account the temporal variation in ELF-MF may have ~~misclassified~~ **resulted in misrepresentation of** the true environmental
 229 exposure ~~at~~ dental office, ~~but~~ the exposure ~~misclassification~~ error would not be systematically different between ~~the~~ **in** ~~^~~ **~s; however, have been**
 230 hospital and dental office environments. The temporal variability might also partly explain the discrepancy between
 231 level of personal exposure and environmental intensity of ELF-MF in the dental clinics. Moreover, our study findings ~~^~~ **~s**
 232 were based on a volunteer sample of dentists, and the sample size was not considered large enough to assure external
 233 validity, which ~~all~~ ~~limited~~ ~~the~~ generalizability of our study findings. ~~^~~ **s**
 234 The other limitation ~~for~~ **to** our study was related to the selection of places for measurements ~~and~~ the measurement
 235 time period were not identical in the dental offices involved in our study, ~~which is~~ mainly due to practical reasons. All the
 236 hospital dental departments and clinical dental offices ~~included in our study~~ were solicited to participate, and they ~~are~~ **in this study were**
 237 different in size and interior design. As such, although we ~~had~~ a standardize measurement protocol, we were unable to ~~^~~ **used ~d**
 238 completely follow the measurement protocol in the ~~filed~~, and ~~can~~ only take the measurements at places where we were
 239 allowed ~~to~~ access. ~~^~~ **field could**
 240 Despite controversy about the possible adverse health effect ~~from~~ **to adults of** ELF-MF exposure ~~in adults~~, reducing
 241 occupational ELF-MF exposure of dentists is of importance as their exposure is on a daily basis. Equipment such as
 242 ultraviolet air sterilization system, which emits ~~high~~ ELF-MF levels and ~~is~~ not a built-in element of the main dental ~~^~~ **~s are**
 243 unit, can be placed away from dentists' working area. In addition, ELF-MF magnitude has been reported to be
 244 dissimilar among different models and types of dental instruments¹⁵. ~~Avoid~~ utilization or appropriate allocation of **Limitation of**
 245 those models that ~~may~~ emit high ELF-MF intensity should be considered ~~while~~ **when** setting up dental work station in ~~^~~ **~s**

246 ~~order for avoidance of over~~ ^{to limit dentists'} exposure to ELF-MF ~~in dentists.~~ In conclusion, it is possible for dentists to encounter
247 overexposure to ELF-MF while treating their patients. Prudent^{~S} avoidance to such ~~over~~ exposure can be achieved by
248 appropriately ^{positioning of} ~~allocating the~~ dental equipment in the office.

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291 **Table 1.** Characteristics of the ~~study~~ dentists **participating in this study**

	Hospital dentists (N=33)		Clinic dentists (N=32)	
	n	%	n	%
Gender				
Male	21	63.6	21	65.6
Female	12	36.4	11	34.4
Age				
≤ 29	3	9.38	11	32.14
30 – 39	8	25.00	13	39.29
40 – 49	6	18.75	3	10.71
50 – 59	9	28.13	2	7.14
≥ 60	6	18.75	3	10.71
Mean±SD	46.00±12.64		37.25±12.32	
Month of measurement				
June, 2008	3	9.09	2	6.25
July, 2008	3	9.09	2	6.25
August, 2008	21	63.64	10	31.25
September, 2008	4	12.12	4	12.50
October, 2008	0	0.00	1	3.13
January, 2009	2	6.06	2	6.25
February, 2009	0	0.00	11	34.38
Time of measurement				
Morning	25	75.76	4	12.50
Afternoon	6	18.18	8	25.00
Evening	2	6.06	20	62.50
Duration of measurement				
<2	2	6.06	2	6.25
2 – <3	10	30.30	15	46.88
3 – <3.5	14	42.42	10	31.25
≥ 3.5	7	21.21	5	15.63
Mean±SD	3.07±0.61		3.04±0.80	

293 **Table 2.** Magnetic field intensity (μT) exposure of dentists at the time of performing dental treatment

Statistic ^a	Hospital dentists (N=33)	Clinic dentists (N=32)	<i>p</i> value
Average exposure			
Min. – Max.	0.06-0.90	0.05-0.73	
AM \pm SD	0.24 \pm 0.16	0.28 \pm 0.16	0.283 ^b
GM \pm GSD	0.20 \pm 0.18	0.23 \pm 0.19	
% of time >0.3 μT			
Min. - Max.	0.00 – 91.71	0.20 – 99.96	
AM \pm SD	19.61 \pm 28.89	35.71 \pm 38.87	0.064 ^b
% of time >0.4 μT			
Min. - Max.	0.00 - 88.09	0.00 - 98.88	
AM \pm SD	13.92 \pm 25.90	19.39 \pm 31.70	0.448 ^b

294 ^a AM=arithmetic mean; SD=standard deviation; GM=geometric mean; GSD=geometric standard deviation

295 ^b Mann-Whitney *U*Test

296 **Table 3.** Mean environmental magnetic field intensity (μT) of dental offices

Statistic ^a	Hospitals	Clinics	<i>p</i> value ^b
	n=7	n=15	
Overall			
Min. – Max.	0.07-1.30	0.13-5.03	
AM \pm SD	0.25 \pm 0.18	0.49 \pm 0.34	0.113
GM \pm GSD	0.18 \pm 0.12	0.25 \pm 0.14	
Treatment area			
Min. – Max.	0.08-0.34	0.14-2.51	
AM \pm SD	0.15 \pm 0.08	0.55 \pm 0.67	0.008
GM \pm GSD	0.14 \pm 0.07	0.27 \pm 0.13	
Waiting area			
Min. – Max.	0.17-0.55	0.22-0.14	
AM \pm SD	0.35 \pm 0.51	0.31 \pm 0.18	0.665
GM \pm GSD	0.30 \pm 0.43	0.29 \pm 0.17	

297 ^a AM=arithmetic mean; SD=standard deviation; GM=geometric mean; GSD=geometric standard deviation

298 ^b Mann-Whitney *U* Test

299 **Table 4.** Magnetic field intensity (μT) exposure of dentists at the time of performing dental treatment

	n	Distance from magnetic field source (cm)			
		0	10	30	50
Dental chair unit	29				
Min.		0.19	0.15	0.14	0.04
Max.		58.36	7.19	1.90	1.52
Median		9.63	2.14	0.38	0.31
AM \pm SD		13.11 \pm 12.40	2.48 \pm 1.87	0.46 \pm 0.37	0.32 \pm 0.31
GM \pm GSD		8.09 \pm 0.33	1.79 \pm 0.25	0.36 \pm 0.20	0.23 \pm 0.24
Ultrasonic scaler	15				
Min.		0.13	0.06	0.05	0.05
Max.		113.12	11.52	0.97	0.28
Median		14.68	2.97	0.39	0.15
AM \pm SD		48.25 \pm 5.91	4.4 \pm 4.78	0.41 \pm 0.37	0.16 \pm 0.10
GM \pm GSD		7.01 \pm 1.96	1.61 \pm 0.82	0.27 \pm 0.33	0.13 \pm 0.21
Composite light curing unit ^a	3				
Min.		0.20	1.20	0.13	0.06
Max.		32.80	11.24	1.56	0.25
Median		24.45	6.22	0.85	0.16
AM \pm SD		19.15 \pm 16.93	6.22 \pm 7.01	0.85 \pm 1.01	0.16 \pm 0.13
GM \pm GSD		5.43 \pm 1.75	3.67 \pm 0.49	0.45 \pm 0.58	0.12 \pm 0.27
Ultraviolet air sterilization system ^b	2				
Min.		15.37	4.84	0.96	0.61
Max.		32.16	16.08	2.06	1.34
Median		23.77	10.46	1.51	0.98
AM \pm SD		23.77 \pm 11.87	10.46 \pm 7.95	1.51 \pm 0.78	0.98 \pm 0.52
GM \pm GSD		22.23 \pm 0.17	8.82 \pm 0.23	1.41 \pm 0.17	0.90 \pm 0.18

300 ^a Ortholux XT Visible Light Curing Unit 3M UNITEK (n=2); Elipar™ S10 LED Curing Light, 3M ESPE (n=1)

301 ^b SAMPO MEDICAL T-378 (n=2)