

THOMAS VIOLA, R.Ph., CCP, CDE, CPMP

A collection of various pills and capsules in different colors (white, yellow, blue, orange, pink) and shapes (round, oval, capsule) scattered across the right side of the page.

2025-2026 SPEAKER PACKET

Knowledge of dental
pharmacology has never
been more essential to
patient care.

TOM VIOLA
PHARMACOLOGY DECLASSIFIED

The challenge faced by all dental professionals today is to provide safe and effective treatment to our medically complex patients.

As dental professionals, we must be equally aware of the medical considerations of agents commonly used in the practice of dentistry as well as the dental considerations of the medications frequently prescribed for the treatment of multiple systemic diseases.

In his dynamic, information-packed programs, Tom Viola draws from his 30+ years' experience as a pharmacist, educator, speaker and author to offer a complete overview of the principles of dental pharmacology.

**Make Pharmacology what it was always meant to be:
your most valuable instrument in treating today's
medically complex dental patient.**



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PRESENTATIONS

DENTAL PAIN MANAGEMENT

"C'mon Baby Make It Hurt So...Swell!"

Non-Opioid and Opioid Approaches For Safe and Effective Dental Pain Management

"Hit Me With Your Best Shots!"

Mastering the Science and Safety of Dental Local Anesthetic Agents

MEDICALLY COMPLEX PATIENT MANAGEMENT

"Every Pill You Take...I'll Be Watching You!"

Successfully Interpreting Patients' Complex Medication Histories

"Don't You (Forget About These)!"

What Your Patients May Not Be Telling You About Their Self-Medication

MARIJUANA USE AND ITS DENTAL IMPLICATIONS

"Weed Will, Weed Will, Rock You!"

The Fall and Rise of Cannabis, Cannabinoids and Terpenes and Their Dental Considerations

"Smells Like Green Spirit!"

That "Deja-Vu Moment" We Get When Discussing Vaping Cannabis With Our Patients

DENTAL IMPLICATIONS OF COMMON DISEASE STATES

"Sweet Dreams (Are Not Made of This)!"

The Dental Implications of Diabetes Mellitus and The Medications Used To Treat It

"I Can't Get No...Osseointegration!"

A Comprehensive Overview of Medication-Induced Early Dental Implant Failure

MANAGEMENT OF SPECIAL POPULATIONS

"(Don't) Take It On The Run, Baby!"

Illicit Drugs, Licit Drugs Used Illicitly and Management of Substance Use Disorder

"Talkin' 'Bout My Generation (Alpha)!"

Effective Pharmacologic Management of Pediatric Dental Patients

“C”mon Baby, Make It Hurt So...Swell!”

Non-Opioid and Opioid Approaches For Safe and Effective Dental Pain Management

Pain Management Attracts and Retains Patients

Pain management is a critical component of dental care, yet it requires a careful balance between efficacy, patient safety, and responsible prescribing.

This course explores the pharmacology, indications, and clinical considerations of both non-opioid and opioid analgesics used in the treatment of acute dental pain. Dentists and dental hygienists will learn to compare analgesic options, tailor pain management plans to individual patient needs, and navigate regulatory, ethical, and public health concerns surrounding opioid use.

Emphasis is placed on evidence-based prescribing, patient communication, and strategies to minimize the risk of misuse or dependency.

Suggested Audience: Dentist, Dental Hygienist, Full Team
Suggested Format: Full or Partial Day; Lecture, Keynote



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PHARMACOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Learning Objectives:

Understand the pharmacology and mechanism of action of opioid and non-opioid analgesics, as well as their misuse

Identify the intended roles of these analgesics in the treatment of acute dental pain, as well as situations which may preclude their use

Discuss best practices for prescribing opioid analgesics as part of an individualized patient pain management plan

Describe techniques useful in recognizing and identifying potential addiction as well as avoiding potential drug diversion



“Hit Me With Your Best Shots!”

Mastering the Science and Safety of Dental Local Anesthetic Agents

Effective Pain Management Starts In The Chair

Local anesthesia is foundational to pain control in dentistry, but its effective and safe use requires more than just technical skill, it demands a deep understanding of pharmacology, patient-specific considerations, and evolving clinical protocols.

This course provides an in-depth review of local anesthetics used in dental practice, including mechanism of action, dosage guidelines, pharmacokinetics, contraindications, and potential complications.

Special attention is given to patient-specific modifications, drug interactions, management of adverse reactions, and current best practices. Ideal for both dentists and dental hygienists, this course bridges science, pharmacology and therapeutics to enhance patient safety, comfort, and outcomes.

Suggested Audience: Dentist, Dental Hygienist, Full Team
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Learning Objectives:

- Explain the basic mechanism of action of local anesthetic agents
- Differentiate between the two major classes of local anesthetic agents with respect to their metabolism, adverse effects, drug interactions and contraindications
- Discuss the rationale for the use of vasoconstrictors in local anesthetic solutions and their potential effects in common organ system disease states
- Specify the various local anesthetic agent combinations most commonly used in dentistry and the rationale for their use in specific clinical situations

**“This was by far the BEST
presentation I’ve been to
in 30 years of practice!
I didn’t want it to end!
Really!”**

—D.H., Greater New York Dental Meeting

“Every Pill You Take...I’ll Be Watching You!”

Successfully Interpreting Patients’ Complex Medication Histories

Solve The Mysteries of Medication Histories!

With medically complex patients becoming a routine part of dental practice, understanding and interpreting extensive medication histories is more important than ever.

This course equips dental professionals with the skills needed to analyze complex drug regimens, identify potential oral and systemic implications, and recognize red flags that may affect dental care. From cardiovascular and psychiatric medications to immunosuppressants and polypharmacy in older adults, attendees will learn how to assess risk, tailor treatment plans, and improve safety through effective communication and documentation.

Ideal for both dentists and dental hygienists, this course bridges medicine and dentistry with practical, case-based guidance.

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Learning Objectives:

- Interpret complex medication lists and understand dental implications of commonly prescribed drug classes
- Correlate medications with underlying medical conditions to support accurate risk assessment and comprehensive treatment planning
- Develop strategies for gathering complete and accurate medication histories from patients, including over-the-counter drugs, dietary supplements and unregulated substances
- Recognize polypharmacy and high-risk combinations that may impact dental treatment or require medical consultation



“Don’t You (Forget About These)!”

What Your Patients May Not Be Telling You About Their Self-Medication

What You Don’t Know That You Don’t Know

In today’s information-saturated world, many patients turn to over-the-counter medications, dietary supplements, home remedies, and even unregulated substances to manage their own health, including dental pain and anxiety.

This course explores the growing trend of patient self-medication and the significant implications it has for oral health care. Dentists and dental hygienists will learn to identify self-medication behaviors, recognize potential risks and interactions, and engage patients in nonjudgmental, informed discussion.

Emphasis is placed on pharmacologic literacy, medical history assessment, and strategies to ensure safe, effective, and ethical dental care in a self-directed health culture.

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Learning Objectives:

- Identify common OTC drugs, dietary supplements, and unregulated substances patients use to self-medicate
- Recognize signs and risks of self-medication, including drug interactions, masking of symptoms, delayed diagnosis, and adverse oral effects
- Interpret patient medical histories more accurately by asking targeted questions about non-prescription and alternative therapies
- Evaluate potential interactions between self-administered substances and dental medications or procedures

**“So much practical information!
So many, many laughs!
You held my attention
every second!
I’m blown away!”**

—M.B., Yankee Dental Congress

“Weed Will... Weed Will... Rock You!”

The Fall and Rise of Cannabis, Cannabinoids and Terpenes and Their Dental Considerations

How Much Do We Know About Cannabis?

The DEA considers cannabis to have no accepted medical use. Therefore, it is illegal to possess. Yet, almost every state has enacted legislation aimed at legalizing or decriminalizing cannabis for medical or recreational use. Despite this rise in social and legal acceptance, public health concerns regarding the use of cannabis remain, especially among dental professionals since the major routes of administration of cannabis involves the oral cavity.

This program will introduce dental professionals to the pharmacology of cannabis, including its various dosage forms, routes of administration and adverse reactions. Special emphasis will be placed on the effects of cannabis use on oral health and dental treatment, as well as the proposed use of cannabis in dentistry for the management of patient anxiety and odontogenic pain.

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Suggested Format: Full or Partial Day; Lecture, Keynote



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Learning Objectives:

- Discuss the history and various types of cannabis, as well as its current legal status
- Describe the pharmacology of cannabis, including its mechanism of action, routes of administration, available formulations and proposed uses in dentistry
- Explain the clinical considerations of cannabis use, including adverse reactions, drug interactions, contraindications and effects on major organ systems
- Explore the dental considerations of cannabis, including potential treatment modifications, and strategies for patient care planning



“Smells Like Green Spirit”

That “Deja-Vu Moment” We Get When Discussing Vaping Cannabis With Our Patients

Is It Really Safer Than Smoking Tobacco?

Although conventional cigarette smoking among young adults has declined markedly over the past several decades, there has been a substantial increase in the use of vaporizing devices. While originally designed as alternative delivery vehicles for nicotine in place of tobacco, advances in technology and lack of strict regulation has given rise to the use of these devices as delivery vehicles for a variety of substances, especially cannabis. Unfortunately, very little information is available about the safety of the active and inactive ingredients present in products used for vaping.

This course will provide participants with an overview of cannabis, vaping, and their overall systemic adverse effects. Special emphasis will be given to the oral complications associated with vaping, as well as patient care planning strategies.

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Suggested Format: Full or Partial Day; Lecture, Keynote



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Learning Objectives:

- Describe the pharmacology of cannabis, including mechanism of action, routes of administration and available formulations
- Compare smoking and vaping as alternate delivery systems for introducing drugs like cannabis into the lungs
- Explain current available treatment strategies and patient care planning techniques for patients who vape cannabis
- Describe the oral and systemic complications encountered by patients who vape

**“Thank you for making me
laugh AND learn!
Only YOU could make
pharmacology THIS
enjoyable...and useful!”**

—C.L., Hinman Dental Meeting

“Sweet Dreams (Are Not Made of This!)”

The Dental Implications of Diabetes Mellitus and The Medications Used To Treat It

How Far Will We Go In Treating Obesity?

Diabetes, as well as its numerous systemic complications, is often accompanied by and is exacerbated by numerous other co-morbid conditions.

This program will provide participants with an overview of diabetes mellitus, the arsenal of medications used in its treatment and the complex interplay between diabetes and the oral-systemic disease.

Special emphasis will be placed on the use of new GLP-1 (glucagon-like peptide-1) agonists, such as Ozempic (semaglutide), and dual-action GLP-1/GIP (gastric inhibitory polypeptide) agonists, such as Mounjaro (tirzepatide), for the treatment of diabetes as well as their use in the management of obesity.

Suggested Audience: Dentist, Dental Hygienist, Full Team
Suggested Format: Full or Partial Day; Lecture, Keynote

Learning Objectives:

- Identify the different types of diabetes, including symptoms and differential diagnosis
- Describe the complex interplay of diabetes and periodontal disease as well as the origins of the oral-systemic connection
- Review the various classes of medications used in the treatment of diabetes mellitus and its numerous co-morbidities
- Explore patient management strategies essential for successful treatment planning and proper patient care



DIABETES
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“I Can’t Get No... Osseointegration!”

A Comprehensive Overview of Medication-Induced Early Dental Implant Failure

Think Outside The Box For Implant Failure

As dental implants become increasingly common, so do the complexities associated with their long-term success. Among the lesser-known but critically important risk factors are systemic medications that can compromise osseointegration, wound healing, and bone metabolism.

This course provides a comprehensive look at how commonly prescribed drugs, such as bisphosphonates, SSRIs, proton pump inhibitors, can contribute to early dental implant failure.

Dental professionals will learn how to assess medication risks, modify treatment plans accordingly, and collaborate with prescribing providers to optimize patient outcomes.

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Learning Objectives:

- Identify systemic medications associated with an increased risk of early dental implant failure
- Describe the mechanisms by which these medications interfere with bone healing and osseointegration
- Evaluate patient medication histories for potential implant contraindications including the role of timing, dosage, and duration of drug therapy
- Explore interprofessional communication techniques to coordinate care with physicians and specialists.

“Honestly, I was expecting the worst from a pharmacology course. Wow, was I wrong! I haven’t laughed so hard in ages! Bravo!”

—B.M., Chicago Midwinter Dental Meeting

“(Don’t) Take It On The Run, Baby!”

Illicit Drugs, Licit Drugs Used Illicitly and Management of Substance Use Disorder

Substance Use and Its Dental Considerations

Substance use disorder (SUD) affects millions of individuals and presents unique clinical, ethical, and interpersonal challenges in dental practice.

This course provides dentists and dental hygienists with the tools to recognize the oral and behavioral manifestations of SUD, manage treatment safely and compassionately, and navigate the complexities of care coordination, relapse risk, and stigma.

From methamphetamine-related caries to the implications of opioids, cannabis, alcohol, and emerging substances, participants will explore evidence-based approaches to providing nonjudgmental, trauma-informed, and effective dental care to this vulnerable population.

Suggested Audience: Dentist, Dental Hygienist, Full Team
Suggested Format: Full or Partial Day; Lecture, Keynote

Learning Objectives:

- Define substance use disorder and describe its relevance to dental health and patient management
- Recognize the oral and systemic signs of common substances of misuse (e.g., methamphetamines, opioids, alcohol, cannabis, sedatives)
- Identify the potential complications of SUD during dental treatment, including drug interactions, anesthesia risks, and infection concerns
- Understand legal, ethical, and documentation considerations when treating patients with known or suspected substance use disorders



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“Talkin’ ‘Bout My Generation (Alpha)!”

Effective Pharmacologic Management of Pediatric Dental Patients

Best Practices For Our Most Vulnerable Patients

Pediatric patients are frequently prescribed medications that can significantly influence their oral health, behavior, and dental treatment planning.

This course provides an in-depth review of the most commonly prescribed medications for children and their implications in dental care. Participants will learn how to recognize medication-related oral side effects, manage dental complications, and communicate effectively with caregivers and prescribing physicians to optimize treatment outcomes.

Designed for both dentists and dental hygienists, this course emphasizes interprofessional collaboration and evidence-based strategies tailored to pediatric patients.

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Suggested Format: Full or Partial Day; Lecture, Keynote

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Learning Objectives:

- Identify commonly prescribed pediatric medications across medical specialties
- Describe the oral and systemic side effects of these medications and how they influence dental treatment planning, preventive care, and behavioral management
- Communicate effectively with caregivers and pediatricians regarding medication risks, oral health impacts, and collaborative care strategies
- Apply best practices for documentation and patient education in pediatric medication-related dental care

“Why weren’t you MY pharmacology teacher? I learned more from you in three hours than I did in all of dental school!”

—K.F., Pacific Dental Conference

Past Presentations

- Academy of General Dentistry Scientific Session
- American Dental Association SmileCon
- California Dental Association Annual Meeting
- Chicago Midwinter Meeting
- Florida Dental Convention
- Greater New York Dental Meeting
- Hinman Dental Meeting
- Island Dental Colloquium
- Mid-Continent Dental Conference
- Midwest Dental Conference
- Oregon Dental Conference
- Pacific Dental Conference
- Pacific Northwest Dental Conference
- RDH Under One Roof
- Southwest Dental Conference
- Star of the North Meeting
- Star of the South Meeting
- The Texas Meeting
- Western Regional Dental Experience
- Yankee Dental Congress

Thomas Viola, R.Ph. CCP, CDE, CPMP

Dental professionals are tasked with the safe and effective management of medically complex patients.

Knowledge of dental pharmacology has never been more essential for patient care!

With over 30 years of experience as a board-certified pharmacist, clinical educator, professional speaker and published author, Tom Viola has earned his national and international reputation as the go-to specialist for making pharmacology practical and useful for all members of the dental team.

As the founder of Pharmacology Declassified, Tom provides valuable insight into the complex interplay between pharmacology and physiology so that clinicians may be knowledgeable about the dental considerations of general medicine and the medical considerations of general dentistry.

As an educator, Tom is a member of the faculty of over 10 dental professional degree programs and has received several awards for outstanding teacher of the year.

As an author, Tom is well known for his contributions to several professional journals and pharmacology textbooks and currently serves as a consultant to the American Dental Association's Council on Scientific Affairs.

As a speaker, Tom has been recognized by many industry organizations and associations as a leader in continuing dental education and has presented over 1000 informative and engaging seminars and webinars to dental professionals since 2001.



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