

# New dentistry chair at U of T will assist research, teaching

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SCIENCE REPORTER

Dr. Barry Sessle has happily agreed to sit in a dentist's chair for at least the next three years.

And in that time, the first holder of the University of Toronto's new Arthur Zwingerberger Chair in dentistry hopes he can help lessen or eradicate tooth pain for all the rest of us who will, sooner or later, have to visit one of his colleagues.

"People don't really think research when they think about dentistry, but they should," says Sessle, whose \$2 million chair was announced yesterday at the opening of the university's new \$750,000 Faculty of Dentistry lab.

"Progress in dentistry relies on research, and dental pain and facial pain are (some) of the main areas we are leaders in here at this university."

The new chair is the first of its kind in Canada and was named after the current chairperson of the Canadian dental supply company SciCan, which contributed \$1 million towards its establishment.

Using interest from the endowment fund, the new chair will pay the salary of the dental school's dean in perpetuity. As well, it will fund the recruitment of a young researcher of the dean's choosing.

"This is the first chair, but it's overdue because the strides in dentistry have been remarkable with the ongoing research," says Sessle, an expert in tooth and facial pain management.

"In the faculty we have five or six research areas, including thrusts in restorative dentistry or tooth repair, in bioma-



RICHARD LAUTENS / TORONTO STAR

**NEW TEACHING TOOLS:** Dr. Steve Cohen demonstrates a dental operating microscope at the unveiling of U of T's new high-tech lab yesterday.

terials for implants, microbiology for decay and the economics of and access to dental care."

In their research and teaching capacities, Sessle and his colleagues say they'll be helped immeasurably by a new state-of-the-art dental lab which features micro-camera

technology that can see right into a root canal.

"These cameras can go right into a patient's mouth and show us what's happening ... on a big screen that 200 students can clearly see," says Dr. Malcolm Yasny, director of alumni affairs and continuing education at the dental school.