

NOËLLE M. SANTUCCI, DDS, MA

Dr. Santucci is an Associate Professor in the Department of Preventive and Restorative Dentistry at the University of the Pacific, Arthur A. Dugoni School of Dentistry. She received her dental degree from this same dental school in 1991, completed her Advanced Education in Dentistry residency program in 1992, and received a Master of Educational Psychology and Counseling from the University of the Pacific Benerd School of Education in 1994. She has authored two chapters in *Esthetic Dentistry in Clinical Practice* and has published articles on nutrition, omega-3 in oral and systemic health, and ergonomics and musculoskeletal disorders. Dr. Santucci is a Fellow in both the Pierre Fauchard Academy and the American College of Dentists.

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Bambach Saddle Seat

Ergonomic stool design allows you to treat patients from a variety of positions while always keeping perfect sitting posture



On the surface, dentistry and horseback riding don't seem to have much in common. Yet that was the exact inspiration behind Hager's Bambach Saddle Seat. Developed by avid horseback rider and occupational therapist Mary Gale, it allows the spine to stay in a natural "S" shape. Here, Dr. Noelle M. Santucci shares how this innovative chair takes the guesswork out of maintaining good posture.

Dentistry is very difficult on the body. No matter how hard we try to maintain good posture, we inevitably find ourselves in an awkward position for long periods of time. Musculoskeletal disorders push many practitioners into early retirement, so it's important to be cognizant of your body's mechanics when you're treating patients—starting with the chair you sit in every single day.

I've been working in the dental field since I was a teenager. Hired as a dental assistant at 16, I was mentored by my boss to go into dental hygiene and worked as a hygienist for several years before deciding to pursue dental school. I'm only 5'2", so I quickly realized that sitting in a chair and being able to see over my patients all day was incredibly challenging. I started researching to see if there was anything that would accommodate my small stature. Soon after, I came across the Bambach Saddle Seat.

The Science of Support

What I love about the Bambach Saddle Seat is that I can raise it quite a bit higher than a regular stool and it keeps me upright naturally without having to worry about a backrest. It allows the spine to stay in its natural "S" shape that relaxes my back and neck muscles while encouraging better circulation.

I was a ballet and modern dancer before attending dental school and, as you can imagine, posture is critical to both dentistry and dance. The upright posture this seat allows is so natural and comfortable

to me because it's how I would stand when I was dancing. It's nice to use a chair that, without my having to think about it, naturally puts my spine in a proper position. I suffered from back and neck issues, as well as wrist pain, early in my dental career, so I learned quickly how important it was to focus on ergonomics, use the correct chair, accommodate the patient to my proper position, and exercise on a regular basis.



An Investment in Your Health

Dentists are always in the market for new ideas and products that can help them—a new composite, bonding agent, handpiece, or lab. So, why would we assume that the traditional doctor chair is going to be the best choice for the entire span of our career?

I have been using the Bambach Saddle Seat for 25 years. It may seem like a big investment, but I assure you that it's not going to wear out within 6 months or a year. It's been designed to improve your posture and stay with you for decades. When you think of it that way, it would be crazy not to try it.