



Pilot Research Grant:

Emily Anne Lanzel, DDS, MS

Visiting Assistant Professor

College of Dentistry, University of Iowa

Iowa City, IA

Project Title: *Salivary biomarkers for diagnosis of childhood Sjögren's syndrome*

Abstract: Sjögren's syndrome, usually seen in adults, can also occur in children. However, it has clinical signs that are different from those in adults. These children often lack the classical dry eyes and dry mouths, but present with gland swelling and inflammation and/or less-specific symptoms such as joint pain. By the time they are diagnosed in adulthood, the process may no longer be in the early stages. Our objective of this study is to identify reliable biomarkers that may be used to diagnose childhood Sjögren's. We believe that the study of these children is more likely to result in identification of biomarkers associated with their early tissue changes and pathology. We propose to develop a reliable diagnostic biomarker that can be evaluated through a noninvasive procedure. This would be a huge advance with immediate clinical impact leading to more reliable diagnosis allowing for early interventions aimed at prevention of long-term organ damage and irreversible symptoms.