

SANGI Press Conference at IDS 2019

From space to the mouth: the original hydroxyapatite toothpaste comes to Germany

The International Dental Show 2019 (IDS) once again offered a cascade of innovations. A highlight in the area of home-based oral care was the appearance of traditional Japanese company SANGI, from Tokyo, with its hydroxyapatite toothpastes, which are currently being introduced into Germany. SANGI explained its products' application and scientific background at a press conference titled: " The Original from Japan: Space-inspired Hydroxyapatite Toothpaste for Remineralization "

First, Chairman and SANGI company founder Shuji Sakuma gave an insight into the company history. Initially a small trading company, SANGI acquired a NASA patent for remineralizing bones and teeth. This eventually sparked the idea of using hydroxyapatite, a mineral that is naturally part of the human body. In 1980 SANGI launched APADENT, the world's first toothpaste using hydroxyapatite as an agent for remineralizing teeth. Five years later APAGARD, a second product line, followed.

Mr Sakuma explained that 15 years later, in the early 1990s, SANGI's special form of hydroxyapatite, <mHAP>, was officially recognized by the Japanese government as an anti-caries agent. The effect was proven by a wide range of studies. Today, SANGI toothpastes are very popular in Japan: they have a market share of 7%, including OEM products manufactured for other companies. And in the top-end 'beautiful whiteness' segment APAGARD holds a market share of 50%. In fact, APAGARD PREMIO was the first toothpaste to be awarded "Hall of Fame" status by @cosme, Japan's top portal for consumer assessment of beauty products, having been the most highly recommended toothpaste for three consecutive years from 2015 to 2017. Because of this popularity, Mr Sakuma said SANGI received various approaches from overseas, and now export its toothpastes, since 2011, to

Russia, Canada, Eastern Europe and a number of Asian countries. Since late 2017, preparations also began for exporting to Western Europe, starting with the establishment of a local subsidiary, SANGI Europe GmbH in Germany.

Following this introduction, dental hygienist Izumi Hashizume explained the function of SANGI's <mHAP> via studies and microscopic images. Human tooth enamel consists almost entirely (97%) of hydroxyapatite, a biological calcium phosphate compound, in the form of tightly packed enamel rods. SANGI's <mHAP> remineralizes enamel on and below the surface and adsorbs harmful bacteria such as *S.Mutans* better than other calcium phosphates. It also protects against hypersensitivity, by coating exposed dentinal tubules, and helps restore the gloss and natural whiteness of the teeth.

Ms Hashizume explained that SANGI's product lines for launch in the German market are APADENT and APAGARD. SANGI has produced an EU-compliant version specifically for the European market, using a microcrystalline version of the active ingredient, whereas in Japan <mHAP>'s particle size was reduced to nanoscale in 2003. The original hydroxyapatite enamel remineralizing toothpaste, APADENT, which protects against tooth decay and periodontitis, will appear in three different versions in Germany: APADENT Total Care for overall care, APADENT Sensitive for hypersensitivity and APADENT Kids. The APAGARD product line, also based on SANGI's specific hydroxyapatite, which helps restore gloss and the density of tooth enamel, comes in three different versions: M-plus, the standard version in the family-friendly bigger tube, offers a balanced mix of the advantages of all products. APAGARD Smokin' is particularly effective against stains resulting from consumption of cigarettes, coffee or wine etc. Finally, APAGARD PREMIO, SANGI's most popular product in Japan, completes the portfolio, with a higher <mHAP> concentration than the other APAGARD pastes.

Jochen Freibert , responsible for Market Development and Regulatory Affairs at SANGI Europe GmbH, explained the company's intention to follow a conservative marketing approach in Germany. SANGI's products are to be distributed exclusively to pharmacies, via two wholesalers, Sanacorp and Hageda-Stumpf, and also to dental clinics. SANGI plans to abstain from major advertising such as television commercials, and to put more emphasis on product sampling, broad-ranging publicity, and a wide range of information in the form of studies and explanations on hydroxyapatite, as well as recommendations by users. This strategy has already proved to be very successful in Japan, where the repeat-rate for users of SANGI's products is over 40%.