

Short communication on oral diseases and prevention

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ABSTRACT

Good oral health can have a significant impact on the overall health and well-being of individuals. It affects people physically and mentally. Oral outlook exerts some huge influences on growth, lifestyle, look, speaking, chewing, food taste, and socialization. Oral diseases on the other hand affect an individual's well-being throughout life. This implies that good caretaking of the mouth, teeth, and gums is crucial. In this article, oral health and diseases, as well as oral diseases prevention are discussed.

KEYWORDS

oral diseases; oral health; dental health

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INTRODUCTION

Our mouth may be regarded as a window into the health of our body. We use our teeth and mouths a lot and many things can go wrong. A healthy mouth can be a great asset. The teeth contain a vital pulp and are supported by the periodontal ligament [1]. Our teeth play many functions. They help us chew and digest food, communicate with others, smile, and give our face its shape. In light of this, it is expedient to give our oral health the best care possible. Good health is a major resource for social, economic, and personal development. Oral health is an integral part of general health and wellbeing. It has vast implications on quality of life, affecting an individual's psychological health, ability to socialize, feelings of social wellbeing, and enjoyment of life. Good oral health enables individuals to communicate effectively and enjoy foods. The word "oral" refers to the mouth, which includes the teeth, the gums, and their supporting tissues.

IMPORTANCE OF ORAL HEALTH

Studies show that poor oral health has a costly and detrimental impact on general health. Many systemic diseases and conditions have oral manifestations. Oral health is important to our general health and wellbeing and can be achieved by all Americans. Good oral health contributes to a person's ability to speak, smile, taste, chew, swallow, and make facial expressions. Poor oral hygiene can lead to gum disease. It can impair our ability to eat and speak properly, causing pain and bad breath. Oral health involves the prevention of dental diseases. The major factors that affect oral health include individual biology and genetics, the environment, personal behaviors and lifestyle, access to care, and the organization of healthcare. Access to oral healthcare is dictated by factors such as education level, income, race, age, sex, and ethnicity.

TYPES OF ORAL DISEASES

Oral diseases pose a serious health concern. They affect people throughout their lifetime, causing pain, discomfort, and even death. You may experience at least one dental problem during your lifetime. Common oral diseases include [2, 3]:

• *Cavities*

These are areas of the tooth that have been permanently damaged, sometimes with holes. Cavities occur when bacteria, food, and acid coat your teeth and form a plaque.

• *Gum disease*

This is an infection or a destructive inflammation of the gums and it is also called gingivitis. It is usually the result of plaque building up on your teeth due to poor brushing and flossing habits. Untreated gingivitis can lead to periodontitis, a more serious infection.

• Periodontitis

This is the more advanced stage of gum or gingivitis. Factors that contribute to gingivitis and periodontitis include smoking, poor brushing habits, snacking on sugary foods and drinks.

• Cracked teeth

A tooth can crack or break due to an injury to the mouth or chewing hard foods.

• Sensitive teeth

Your teeth are sensitive when you feel pain or discomfort after taking cold or hot foods or drinks.

• Oral cancer

This includes cancer of the gums, tongue, lips, or cheek. Smoking or chewing tobacco is the biggest risk factor for oral cancer.

• Dry mouth

Some medications can affect the amount of saliva in your mouth.

• Mouth Sores

There are many types of mouth sores. It is usually nothing to worry about and will disappear on its own. But if it lasts more than two weeks, you should see your dentist.

• Noma

This is a severe gangrenous disease of the mouth and the face. It mostly affects children between the ages of 2 and 6 years suffering from malnutrition, mostly in many developing countries in Africa and Asia.

• Dental erosion

Dental erosion is the progressive, irreversible loss of dental hard tissue.

• Dental caries

This is commonly known as tooth decay. It affects people of all ages, causing tooth loss if not treated. It is the most common chronic disease in school-aged children. Untreated dental caries remains the most prevalent oral condition worldwide. Other serious health problems caused by bad oral health include cardiovascular disease, dementia, respiratory infections, diabetes, pregnancy complications, infertility, erectile dysfunction, kidney disease, and rheumatoid arthritis. Some of these diseases are a life-and-death matter. Oral diseases are among the most expensive diseases to treat in some countries.

PREVENTION OF ORAL DISEASE

Maintaining healthy teeth and gums is a lifelong commitment. Everyone has a role to play in preventing, improving, and promoting oral health. Achieving oral health requires a combination of efforts from individuals, healthcare and dental professionals, and community-based activities. Prevention of disease is regarded as the key to maintaining good overall health. It should be a primary goal of any society that hopes to provide a decent quality of life for its citizens. Oral health prevention strategies aim to prevent oral health disease before it occurs or to reduce the impact of oral health disease. Many oral diseases can be prevented through early detection and intervention. The prevention of oral disease and disability has been investigated by scientists, dentists, dental hygienists, and other health professionals. The existing prevention measures can be adopted by everyone to improve oral health and prevent disease. These measures include daily oral hygiene procedures, tobacco control, and cessation programs, and community-based preventive programs [4]. Consider taking care of your oral health as an investment in your overall health. You can keep your teeth healthy and reduce oral disease by:

- brushing your teeth with a fluoride toothpaste at least twice a day
- flossing your teeth at least once a day
- using mouthwash to remove food particles left after brushing and flossing

- replacing your toothbrush every three or four months or sooner
- promoting a well-balanced diet high in fruit and vegetables
- favoring fluoridated water as the main drink
- limiting your intake of sugar
- reducing alcohol consumption
- eating a diet high in fruits and vegetables
- avoiding smoking cigarettes or chewing tobacco products
- seeking professional dental care
- scheduling regular dental checkups and cleanings

CONCLUSION

Proper oral health is essentially maintaining healthy teeth. Oral health is vital to total health and satisfactory quality of life. The negative impact of inadequate care for teeth, gums, bite, and jaws can move beyond the mouth to affect overall physical health. Regular brushing, flossing, and dentist visits can help prevent disease in our mouth. Prevention of diseases is the most cost-effective approach and has the greatest impact on society. The promotion of good oral health is a fundamental need across the globe. Educating ourselves on the common oral health problems and their causes can also go a long way in prevention. Oral health should also be promoted and discussed in schools to help children and adolescents develop correct oral health behaviors.

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