Oral Hygiene Education
Study Objectives

• To outline the basic principles underlying the provision of oral hygiene education.
• To provide information on how to conduct an oral hygiene education session.
Introduction

• Good oral hygiene is important in the prevention of the common oral diseases especially dental caries and periodontal disease.

• These two diseases are the commonest conditions affecting the oral cavity in most communities.
Introduction - 2

• The proper daily use of dental hygiene tools will help achieve low level of oral bacteria.

• This will result in the reduction of bad breath, in fewer cavities and in a healthier periodontal tissues.
Principles of Oral Hygiene Education

• Learning occurs in three domains
• These are the cognitive (knowledge), affective (attitude) and behavioural domains.
Principles of Oral Hygiene Education - 2

- Oral hygiene education sessions can be conducted for individuals and groups.
- It can occur in a variety of settings such as the dental clinic, schools, out-patient clinics and workplace.
Principles of Oral Hygiene Education - 3

• In order to achieve the greatest possible success you must always plan your oral hygiene education sessions.
Planning Oral Hygiene Sessions

1. Obtain background information on the target group or person
2. Select the discussion topic
3. Write aims and objectives of the session
4. Select visual aids and other resources to be used
5. Develop lesson plan and rehearse
   - Conduct the OHE session
6. Plan evaluation
Steps for Oral Hygiene Education

- **Step 1**: Patient orientation and introduction to their mouths
- **Step 2**: Use of disclosing agent and patient demonstration of his or her usual hygiene practices
- **Step 3**: Demonstration of appropriate brushing technique
- **Step 4**: Introduction of flossing
Step 1

• The main focus of this step is to get patients interested in their oral self care.
• The primary objective is to introduce patients to their mouths.
Step 1 - 2

- Start by showing the patient his/her own oral tissues up close. For example, using a hand mirror and the overhead dental lamp show the ‘gums’, teeth, root surfaces if exposed and tongue.
• Then discuss the relationship between plaque and dental conditions such as caries using available teaching aids.

• A good diagram would be one showing the teeth covered in plaque or a cut-away diagram with caries penetrating enamel, dentine and pulp.
Step 1 - 3

• With an educated and knowledgeable person you may also use radiographs. For example, you could point out that darker images, such as the nerves in the teeth, soft tissues and even cavities.
Step 1- 4

• The dentist could take this opportunity to point out obvious plaque in the mouth, if it is prominent.
• Use a periodontal probe to pick up a sample of plaque to show the patient while the patient is watching in the hand mirror.
Step 2

- No oral hygiene instruction session is complete without using a disclosing dye.
- Instruct the patient on the appropriate use of the disclosing tablet or solution.
- Solutions are more convenient because they do not require chewing.
Step 2 - 2

• Make sure the patient chews the tablets thoroughly and the licks all teeth.
• The solution is then swished in the mouth and spat out.
Step 2 - 3

• This should be followed by at least two water rinses.
• Alternatively, the dentist or dental assistant can rinse and suck out the excess solution using a suction.
The patient then looks into the hand mirror to see the displayed areas of plaque accumulation. The disclosing dye shows the areas of plaque accumulation. A blast of air from the air-water syringe should be used to reveal the stained plaque.
Step 2 - 5

- For older patients, demonstrate the stained plaque to the patient with a hand mirror, indicating the areas that were tooth brushing missed.
Step 2 - 6

• For children, paint on the dye with a cotton swab, rinse with the air-water syringe, suck with the saliva ejector...and make it fun!
• This is also an opportunity to show the parent or guardian how effective the tooth brushing was.
Step 2 - 7

• Then ask the patient to demonstrate how (s)he carries out oral hygiene at home. It would be important to use toothbrushes for demonstration.

• Some patients have trouble getting all the plaque off despite having just seen exactly where they missed with the toothbrush.
Step 2 - 8

• It is important that you observe how patient toothbrush to be able to make patient specific recommendations.

• Education needs to be tailored to patients need for there to be significant changes.
Step 2 - 9

• Encourage the patient even if (s)he is not able to brush effectively.

• At this stage, note any problems in dexterity or oral hygiene ineffectiveness in the dental records.
Step 3

- Using a tooth brush specifically selected for the age of the patient, demonstrate an appropriate tooth brushing technique in the patient’s mouth as the patient looks on in the hand mirror.
Step 3 - 2

- For the toddler, scrubbing back and forth is acceptable.
- For a child, demonstrate the simple ‘roll’ technique in the child’s mouth with a parent present.
- For teens and adults, the modified Stillman’s technique should be introduced.
Step 3 - 3

• Once demonstrated, the patient should be encouraged to try the technique (while the dentist holds the hand mirror).

• The patient inspects his or her teeth to observe that more plaque was indeed removed
Step 4

• Brushing cannot clean the interdental spaces, a place where periodontitis and caries often start.
• The best way to clean between the teeth is to floss.
Step 4 - 2

- Floss comes in many shapes, styles and flavours.
- Encourage patients to find the one they like and use it regularly.
Step 4 - 3

- The dentist should demonstrate proper flossing technique to the patient by starting with a long piece of floss.
Step 4 - 4

• Wrap the long piece of floss around the middle fingers of both hands so that it can be comfortably held.

• For the lower teeth, hold the floss with the index fingers. For the upper teeth, hold the floss with the thumb and forefinger.
Step 4 - 5

• Gently slide the floss between the teeth.
• Wrap it around one tooth in a ‘c’ shape and carefully slide it under the gum line, moving it gently up and down along the side of the tooth.
Step 4 - 6

• Just like you will do when brushing, using the same pattern every time will make this process fun and enjoyable.

• Encourage patients to keep in mind that flossing will take time to learn, so they should be patient. Practice makes perfect.
1. Wind 18" of floss around middle fingers of each hand. Pinch floss between thumbs and index fingers, leaving 1" - 2" length in between. Use thumbs to direct floss between upper teeth.

2. Keep a 1" - 2" length of floss taut between fingers. Use index fingers to guide floss between contacts of the lower teeth.

3. Gently guide floss between the teeth by using a zig-zag motion. DO NOT SNAP FLOSS BETWEEN YOUR TEETH. Contour floss around the side of the tooth.

4. Slide floss up and down against the tooth surface and under the gumline. Floss each tooth thoroughly with a clean section of floss.
Step 4 - 7

- Patients with restorations, crowns, bridges and implants will require more time for flossing.
- The same techniques described is what is need to maintain healthy gums and teeth.
Step 4 - 8

- A floss threader can be used to floss with regular floss under bridges or behind fixed retainers.
- Simply thread the floss through the loop of the floss threader then slide the threader below the bridge or behind the retainer until one end of the floss is on each side. Grab hold of each end and floss as normal.
STEP 4 - 9

- Superfloss can be used under bridges or behind fixed retainers such as those that may have been placed after having braces.
STEP 4 – 10

- Use the softer, larger end as you would regular floss.
- Press the floss against the tooth in a ‘c’ shape and move it gently up and down against the side of the teeth. Then repeat on the adjacent tooth.
STEP 4 - 11

• To demonstrate use of a proxa brush, gently pass the brush behind the wire of a fixed retainer, between spaced teeth at the gum line or under a bridge, while moving the brush in a circular motion, then back out.

• This should be repeated until all areas of the appliance or all spaces have been cleaned.
Step 4 - 12

• A sulca brush is convenient for getting behind teeth and at the gum line. Simply run the tip gently along the gum line to remove the plaque.

• Again, remind patients brushing and flossing takes patience and it may take time to become comfortable with the proper techniques.
Step 4 - 13

• Make it clear to the patient that brushing two times daily and flossing at least once a day will help to maintain a healthy smile.

• Encourage regular visits to the dentist as well.
Step 4 - 14

• With good home care and routine check-ups, dentist and patient can work together to maintain a healthy smile for life.
Concerning oral hygiene education:

a. Planning is central to achieving success
b. Learning occurs only in the affective domain
c. It can be conducted for individuals and groups
d. It can be carried out by dental personnel only
Quiz 2

Brushing technique recommended for young children:

a. Is influenced by age
b. Simple roll technique can be used by children
c. The Stillman’s technique is also appropriate
d. Dexterity should be considered when teaching toothbrushing
Quiz 3

Other tools that can be used for oral hygiene include:

a. Dental floss
b. Sulca brush
c. Denture polish
d. Interdental brush
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