

Webinar on

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Dental staff and occupational hazards

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Occupational hazard can be defined as a risk to a person usually arising out of employment. It can also refer to a work, material, substance, process, or situation that predisposes or itself causes accidents or diseased a work place. Dental professionals are predisposed to many of occupational hazards. That includes exposure to infections (including Human Immunodeficiency Virus and viral hepatitis); percutaneous exposure incidents, dental materials, radiation, and noise; musculoskeletal disorders; psychological problems and dermatitis; respiratory disorders; and eye insults. Therefore, the aim of the paper is to increase the level of awareness of occupational hazards among the dental surgeons and also to provide information on the ways in which hazards can be reduced.

Introduction

Occupational hazards refer to a risk or danger as a consequence of the nature or working conditions of a particular job. Dentistry is considered by the practitioners and most of the public as being extremely hazardous. The hazards include the following: Infectious hazards: Needles and other sharp objects, spatter, and aerosols can transmit viral infections such as life-threatening infections such as acquired immunodeficiency syndrome and hepatitis B. Bacterial infections also play an important role. The leading causes that should be concerned are syphilis and tuberculosis. Psychological hazards: Stress is the leading psychological condition that occurs in the dental profession, Allergic reactions: Gloves containing latex are the main causes of the allergic skin irritation. Objective Dentistry is a noble profession in an extremely complex field with a wide

variety of specialties providing services to people around the globe. Therefore, knowing the various occupational hazards that dentists encounter during their daily routine is of utmost importance, because these hazards may affect their outcome of their treatments and can even lead to disabilities.

Prevention

Ways to prevent anxiety disorders include the following: 1. Anxiety management programs, which should be directed at 2 levels: dental students and dentists; 2. Stress management workshops for stress-relieving exercises like deep breathing, listening to audiotapes, and effective relaxation of body parts; 3. Regular physical activity or exercises, meditation, and desensitization; 4. The use of antidepressants or anti-anxiety drugs in extreme conditions; 5. Practicing positive thinking in negative situations; 6. Learning interpersonal communication skills or how to deal with conflict. Ways to prevent musculoskeletal problems include: 1. Taking periodic breaks and stretching between appointments; 2. Avoiding static postures for long periods and shifting the workload from one group of muscles to another; 3. Observing proper posture techniques during procedures; 4. Acquiring education about musculoskeletal health and disorder prevention; 5. Sharing the workload with team members. There are some ways to prevent allergic reactions to latex. 1. Avoid repeated exposure to latex; 2. Use cornstarch powder-free gloves; 3. Take antihistamines and corticosteroids to help control inflammatory reactions; 4. In the case of anaphylactic shock, epinephrine is the drug of choice along with intra-venous fluid.

Biography

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