Oklahoma Nursing Home Oral Care Project

TMF Health Quality Institute

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Credits

TMF thanks the following organizations for the use of segments, including photos, of their professionally-developed content on oral health care, for this educational purpose:

• University of Kentucky School of Dentistry – Nursing Home Oral Health
• Dalhousie University – Brushing Up on Mouth Care
Importance of Daily Oral Care for the Elderly
Pre Assessment

Training #1 - Importance of Daily Oral Care for the Elderly
What you will learn today

• The links between daily oral hygiene, dental-related diseases and overall health
• Causes of tooth decay and gum disease
• How to prevent tooth decay and gum disease
• Daily oral hygiene tips
• How to use a daily oral health assessment tool
This program is designed to help you become Oral Care Champions for your residents
Free resource for you

- Onsite Education and Strategies
- Online Education/Free CE
- Helpful Tools and Resources
PLAQUE is a substance filled with germs (bacteria) which forms every day on the teeth.

Plaque may be clear, white or may be stained and look yellow.
Plaque and tartar may both be present on the teeth. Plaque is soft and can be removed by tooth brushing, while tartar is hard and must be removed by a professional dental cleaning.
If plaque is not removed daily by brushing and flossing, it will harden to become tartar (calculus)
Plaque causes tooth decay (cavities)
Plaque also causes gum disease

Note that gums are very red and swollen. This person has gum disease.
Brushing and flossing can prevent gum disease, cavities and tooth loss

Daily mechanical removal of plaque by brushing and flossing the teeth is the best way to prevent cavities and gum disease.
Quiz your knowledge

What causes cavities?
What causes gum disease?

*If you don’t remember, go back 2-3 slides*
Findings of a 2008 study in a Florida nursing home

Nursing home residents who had daily mouth care provided by *nursing assistants whose only job was to provide oral care* had three times less risk of dying from pneumonia than those residents who did not receive the daily care from the nursing assistant designated to do oral care.

The Florida study is important because pneumonia is the number one cause of death in nursing homes.
Breathing in germs from a dirty mouth is a significant risk factor for pneumonia

- Germs from this plaque can get into the lungs and cause pneumonia.

Quiz your Knowledge, 2

• Brushing the teeth decreases the risk of pneumonia in nursing home residents
  – True
  – False
Gum disease may increase risk of stroke and heart disease
Let’s watch this video on gum disease and treatment

If plaque is not removed from teeth by regular brushing, it may cause serious problems in the body. This is because harmful bacteria from plaque on the teeth can get into the bloodstream and can cause hardening of the arteries, increased risk of blood clots and makes it harder to control blood sugar.
Residents with diabetes and severe gum disease have more trouble controlling their blood sugar levels.

So this...

...can affect this
Residents with diabetes and severe gum disease are more likely to die from complications

Eleven-year study of 628 people found that those with severe gum disease had three times the risk of death from heart disease and/or kidney disease compared with those who had no gum disease or mild or moderate gum disease.

Quiz your Knowledge, 3

What effect does gum disease have on residents who have diabetes?

If you do not remember, go back 2 slides
A dirty mouth can make residents sick
A healthy mouth helps people eat the proper foods and prevents pain
The three reasons tooth brushing is important in nursing homes

- Prevention of cavities and gum disease
- Dirty mouths can make residents sick
- Aid residents in receiving proper nutrition
Xylitol

- What is Xylitol?
  - Sugar alcohol from plants
  - All natural
  - Fiber from fruits and vegetables
  - Reduces cavities
  - Great for dry mouths
How Xylitol works

Xylitol

Bacteria-Plaque

Acid

Sticky byproduct

Digestion

Eat

Reduced Cavities
Strive for 5

*Strive for five exposures to Xylitol daily to reduce decay*

- Breakfast
- Mid-morning snack
- Lunch
- Mid-afternoon snack
- Dinner
Where can you find Xylitol?

- Grocery stores, health stores
- Mints, gums, toothpaste, mouthwash, lozenges, gels and sweets
Oral Care for Older Adults

Let’s watch this video on oral care for older adults
Daily Oral Health Assessment

Report any of the following to charge nurse, doctor or dentist:

- Pain
- Lumps, swelling, or sores
- Dry corners of the mouth
- Red or white patches
- Dry mouth
- Broken or decayed teeth
- Broken or lost dentures or partials
Oral cancer in the elderly

• 7 times more likely to be diagnosed with oral cancer than those under age 65
• Death from oral cancer is attributed to late diagnosis = poor prognosis
• Not all lesions in the mouth are cancerous
• Mostly found on tongue/floor of mouth and soft palate
• When in doubt, refer out
Herpes Labialis (lip)

• Begin as blisters, then blisters scab over
• Contagious- may spread by touching: fingers, toothbrushes, towels, cups, etc.
• Healing occurs in 7-14 days
• Report this condition to charge nurse
• Do Not provide oral care until this has been checked by charge nurse
Daily Oral Health Assessment Tool
Angular Chelitis

• Sores at the corners of the lips may be caused by:
  – Ill-fitting dentures
  – Yeast infection
  – Vitamin deficiency
  – Dry mouth

• Report this condition to charge nurse, doctor or dentist
Daily Oral Health Assessment Tool
Aphthous Ulcer (Canker Sore)

- Painful yellow-white ulcer
- Not contagious
- Usually found on inside of lips or cheeks
- Burning, itching, stinging
- May be uncomfortable to brush teeth or rinse with mouthwash
- Report to nurse, doctor or dentist for treatment
Daily Oral Health Assessment Tool
Oral lichen planus & cheek biting

Residents with red, white or other colored areas on the inside of cheeks should be referred to a nurse, doctor or dentist.
Daily Oral Health Assessment Tool
Hairy tongue

• Most affected residents are smokers
• Also caused by poor oral hygiene, radiation or antibiotic therapy
• Brown, black, yellow or white coloration of tongue
• Report this to nurse, doctor or dentist
Daily Oral Health Assessment Tool
Candida: Yeast infection (Thrush)

• Yeast infections can develop from poor oral hygiene, from taking antibiotics or when a resident is very sick

• Report this condition to the charge nurse, a doctor or dentist
Daily Oral Health Assessment Tool
Dry Mouth

- Dry, cracked lips (esp. corners)
- Tongue looks fissured
- Red, inflamed gums
- Thick, “ropy” saliva
- Tongue blade sticks to tongue
- Report to charge nurse or dentist
Daily Oral Health Assessment Tool
Roof and floor of mouth

Swellings, ulcers, redness, raised lesions, white areas or other discolorations should be reported if found anywhere in the mouth.
Daily Oral Health Assessment Tool
Denture assessment

- Ill fitting dentures can cause sores
- Cleanliness
- Broken/sharp edges
- Missing/broken teeth
- Fit: Is it loose?
- Resident satisfaction?
Quiz your Knowledge

A white coating on the tongue or roof of the mouth is probably caused by what?
Request for dental consult or appointment

Resident Name________________________
Date________________________

This resident needs to be seen by a DENTIST or DENTAL HYGEINIST for the following reason:

Signed:________________________
Post Assessment

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Additional Resources

• Texas Oral Health Coalition: [http://txohc.org](http://txohc.org)

Access to Dental Care Resources:

• **Health Resources & Services Administration**: “Find a Health Center” - Health Centers provide preventive and primary health care, even if you do not have insurance. [https://www.hrsa.gov/index.html](https://www.hrsa.gov/index.html)

• **2-1-1 Texas** - If you do not have Medicaid, or if you are 21 years old or older, 2-1-1 is a free help line that is answered in more than 90 languages, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. An operator can help you find a dentist near you. You can also search online by zip code. [http://www.211texas.org/](http://www.211texas.org/)

• **Mouth Healthy** - American Dental Association. “ADA Find a Dentist” - search by zip code, discipline of dentistry, search by patient type (geriatric) and payment options. [http://www.mouthhealthy.org/en](http://www.mouthhealthy.org/en)

• **Texas Association of Community Health Centers** - Dental help for uninsured individuals. Search at [https://www.tachc.org/](https://www.tachc.org/)
Thank you for spending your valuable time with me today

You are the Oral Care Champions for your residents.