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Professor Davide

Writing assignment 2

**Part 1: Understanding Gingivitis and Periodontitis**

From watching these videos, I have learnt about the symptoms, causes, and treatments of Gingivitis. Gingivitis occurs when there is a buildup of plaque biofilm that causes inflammation of the surrounding gum tissue. The inflammation can cause bleeding, redness, and halitosis.

Pregnancy, medications, stress, smoking, poor oral hygiene, and chronic diseases are risk factors for Gingivitis. Since it can be reversed with proper treatment, it is important for me to educate all of my patients about the importance of proper oral care. I would recommend that my patients brush their teeth twice a day for two minutes with an anti-gingivitis dentifrice that contains stannous fluoride. After they brush, they should use an anti-bacterial mouth rinse and floss to help fight and remove bacteria. I would recommend an electric toothbrush for my patients who have dexterity and demonstrate the Modified Bass method for those who do not. Additionally, I would tell them to make follow up appointments with a dental professional. It is important for me to educate all of my patients about Gingivitis and inform them that if it is left untreated, it can lead to Periodontitis which is irreversible (Crest, 2019.)

**Part 2: Toothbrushing (TB) Methods and Types**

**TB Methods**

It is an important task as a dental hygienist to explain to my patients the best method of toothbrushing. To ensure that my patient brushes all of the surfaces of their teeth, I can educate them on how to overlap 2 teeth when they are brushing. If my patient has a dexterity problem or a disability, I would recommend for them to use an electric toothbrush. Some toothbrushes can connect to a mobile app and have a built in timer. The app is beneficial because it can show what areas they need to focus on. I would teach them to hold it at a 45° to 90°angle to the long axis of the tooth and to move it over the buccal and interproximal surfaces of each tooth for 5 seconds (Boyd, 2020.)

For my patients who do not have a dexterity issue, I would show them how to do the Modified Bass method. This technique is important to clean the sulcus and interproximal areas. I would show them how to position the filaments into the sulcus at a 45° angle to the long axis of the tooth. I would demonstrate how to lightly press the filament tips and vibrate the brush with light strokes back and forth for 10 vibrations. After, I would demonstrate the rolling stroke over the crown to ensure that they clean the whole tooth surface (Lakshmi, 2017 .)

I can provide multiple tips to my patients on how to care for their toothbrushing. I would tell them to purchase a toothbrush with soft bristles and to use light pressure. I would inform my patients to never share their brush with anyone nor put it inside the dishwasher. I would tell all of my patients to replace their manual toothbrush or electrical toothbrush heads after every 2- 3 months. They need to be replaced before the toothbrush filaments become frayed or lose efficiency. The toothbrush should be placed separate from other brushes to avoid cross contamination and in an open area with the head upright to avoid bacterial growth. I would recommend a toothbrush covering with holes to allow moisture evaporation. After they are finished brushing their teeth, they should rinse the brush head with water until it is clean of visible dentifrice, bacteria and debris between the filaments (Boyd, 2020.)

**TB Types**

A manual toothbrush easily conforms to a patient’s individual requirements in texture, shape, and size. It has a handle that is durable and impervious to moisture, and a brush head that contains bristles. There is a variety of different manual brush filament profiles including angled, multilevel, flat, and rippled. There are various different manual toothbrushing methods to remove plaque biofilm that vary based on a patient’s dexterity. An electric toothbrush is automatic and relies on electricity to move the toothbrush head. It is useful for patients with limited dexterity, disabilities, and with orthodontic appliances. The brush head can be moved in various speeds and motions depending on the model. An electric toothbrush has replaceable brush heads that come in different shapes. They do not damage the gingival tissues as much as a manual toothbrush because it can alert the patient when they are applying excessive pressure. (Boyd, 2021.) As mentioned in a presentation from Crest and Oral B on April 13, a manual toothbrush has 400-600 bristle movements per minute compared to a power toothbrush that as up to 55,000 (Crest-Oral B presentation, 2021.) Therefore, it has been suggested that a manual toothbrush is less effective for removing plaque compared to a powered toothbrush (Boyd, 2020.)

There are many pros of a manual toothbrush. A manual toothbrush does not rely on batteries or being charged, so it can always be used. Compared to an electric toothbrush, it is more available in stores and more affordable for patients. Manual toothbrush handles are designed with a textured grip for the patient’s comfort and are available in different colors and designs for children. Some manual brushes have a tongue cleaner and a bumper that is beneficial for aggressive brushers. For patients that have limited dexterity, there are thick handles with finger support (Sinclair, 2020.) However, some brushing methods can be difficult for those who have limited manual dexterity. Therefore, a patient will remove less plaque from interdental areas. Manual brushes do not have a pressure sensor, which can damage gingival tissues for aggressive brushers (Boyd, 2020.)

Electric toothbrushes are beneficial for patients with limited manual dexterity, disabilities, and those with orthodontic appliances. There are a variety of changeable brush heads that are suitable for a patient’s needs. The brush heads are small and round which can help clean tight posterior areas. Some electric toothbrushes can connect to a mobile app where it can coach patients how to clean their teeth better and have a history of when and where they brushed. These brushes can have built-in timers, pressure sensor, play music, have games, and can change color. Although electric brushes can be easier to use for some individuals, they are more expensive and cannot be properly used without being charged or replacing the batteries. For some patients with disabilities, the vibration is not tolerated well (Bradley, 2020.)

For any of my patients who use or are interested in using an electric toothbrush, I would educate them on some tips of the proper use. I would recommend for my patient to purchase a toothbrush head with soft filaments. Since there are a variety of toothbrush heads, I would recommend one that is most suitable for their desired outcome. The heads should be changed around every 2-3 months and cleaned under water after each use. Additionally, I would recommend that they charge it in advance to prevent any issues with the toothbrush. I would suggest that they purchase an electric toothbrush that has Bluetooth so that they can connect it to their mobile device. This is beneficial for the patient for them to see which areas of the teeth they need to focus on and for motivation to improve their oral health.

**Part 3: Flossing Methods**

According to an article from Oral B, dental floss was invented in 1815 by a New Orleans dentist. Dr. Levi Spear Parmly advised his patients to floss with silk thread (Plainfield Pediatric Dentistry, 2016.) “The idea caught on, and in 1882 a company called the Codman and Shurtleft Company, based in Randolph, Massachusetts, began marketing an unwaxed silk dental floss” (Oral B, 2021.) Flossing is essential because toothbrushing alone cannot remove biofilm from proximal tooth surfaces. Additionally, toothbrushing cannot remove biofilm adjacent to the gingiva as well as it does for the other surfaces of the teeth. There are multiple types of floss which are designed for different purposes. Some are beneficial for people who have orthodontic appliances, dental implants, space maintainers, concave proximal surfaces, and fixed prostheses (Boyd, 2020.)

There are 2 methods that a patient can used to floss. The loop method of flossing is prepared by tying together a strand of floss to form a circle. As the floss is used, the floss is rotated around the loop. The benefits of the floss loop method are easier handling, lower string waste, and improved user compliance. The main benefit is that there is an increase in string hygiene and effective plaque removal. The spool method of flossing is prepared by holding 12-15 inches of floss with the index finger and thumb in each hand. Only half inch of floss should be firmly grasped between the fingertips with the ends wrapped around the middle fingers. For the maxillary teeth, the floss should be held upward between the thumb and index finger. For the mandibular teeth, the floss should be directed downward with both of the index fingers. The floss should be gently guided into the interproximal area with a back and forth motion. It should be pressed firmly against the tooth subgingivally, forming a C shape (Boyd, 2020.)

**Part 4: Patient Care**

**How would you approach a 13-year-old teenager who has orthodontic appliances and tells you he brushes once a day and never flossed before getting braces?**

I would approach this patient by educating him about the importance of his oral hygiene. I would inform him that without proper oral care, his teeth can become discolored. I would inform him that when he gets his braces removed, the discoloration can cause a white stain to form where his brackets were. In addition, I would educate him that if he does not brush twice a day or floss, he can develop inflammation and bleeding when brushing. Therefore, I would inform him to brush above and below his brackets at least twice a day for approximately 2 minutes. Additionally, I would recommend for him to rinse twice a day and to use an electric toothbrush that can connect to a mobile app. If he is not interested in the electric toothbrush, I would teach him how to do the Charter’s toothbrushing method. Additionally, I would educate him about the importance of cleaning the interproximal areas. Since he has never flossed before getting his braces, I would spend extra time on demonstrating the proper way to clean the interproximal areas. I would recommend and teach him how to use an interdental brush and a floss threader to help reach underneath his brackets. If the office I work at has interdental brushes, I would give him one to take home and I would ask him to practice using it. At his follow up appointment, I would ask him about his process and address any questions or difficulties that he may have had.

**How would you approach a 28-year-old patient who has localized gingival recession on the buccal surfaces of all posterior teeth, and indicates that they have been scrubbing their teeth using a medium TB bristle their entire life, and only flosses when food gets stuck in-between?**

I would first address this patient by educating him about the importance of his oral hygiene care. I would inform him to use a toothbrush with soft or extra soft bristles. Additionally, I would teach and demonstrate the Modified Bass toothbrushing method on this patient. If they have manual dexterity, I would recommend for them to purchase an electric toothbrush. The electric toothbrush is beneficial because it has a pressure sensor that will automatically stop moving if they apply too much force. The electric toothbrush can help them clean in the interdental area and the localized areas of gingival recession. In addition, I would stress the importance of flossing every day because the interdental areas are prone to bacterial buildup. This is important because if they only floss when they have food impacted, they can be at risk of forming Gingivitis. Additionally, I would educate this patient that if they have inflammation and bleeding, they cannot avoid brushing that area because it can progress into Periodontitis. Therefore, I would demonstrate the proper way to floss with the spool method and encourage them to floss at least once a day in addition to food getting impacted in-between.

**Part 5: Reflection writing prompts:**

**What have you learned from this assignment?**

From this assignment, I have learnt more about the different types of toothbrushes and their benefits. This is very important for me as a future dental hygienist so I know what products to recommend for my patients’ individual needs. In addition, I have learnt how to care for a toothbrush and the different brushing methods for my patients to use in order to achieve their optimal oral hygiene. Additionally, I have learnt more about Gingivitis and the tips that I can give my patients. These tips are important for me to know because I want to educate my future patients on how to prevent it from developing or from progressing into Periodontitis. Many patients are not aware that they have Gingivitis, therefore, it is essential that I educate my future patients on the importance of their oral care. This information is important for me to know in order to answer any questions that my future patients may have and to educate them on how to improve their oral health.

**Did you find this assignment beneficial or not and why?**

I find this assignment to be very beneficial for me. As a future dental hygienist, it is extremely important for me to educate and show all of my patients the desired methods to care for their individual oral health. Most patients scrub their teeth and only floss when they have a food impaction. Therefore, I have learnt about different approaches to address these issues. It is significant for me to be aware of different methods of brushing and products to recommend to my patients to prevent them from forming any bacterial infections. Since I have learnt more about the causes of Gingivitis, I know how to educate my future patients on how avoid them from getting it or having it progress into Periodontitis.

**Do you know of a family member or friend who may have used a TB or floss method incorrectly? Please explain.**

My younger cousin uses the Charter’s toothbrushing method incorrectly. She recently got braces and was instructed to use this method by her dental hygienist. When she brushes her teeth, she uses the scrubbing method and does not properly cleaning between her brackets. This is dangerous because it can lead to a build-up of plaque to form around her braces and can cause discoloration which can cause the brackets to form a white stain on her teeth. Additionally, she does not floss her teeth because she feels that a floss threader is time consuming for her busy schedule. This is really dangerous because she is not removing bacteria from the interproximal areas, which can cause inflammation. The next time I see her, I will reinforce the importance of her using the Charter’s method. If she still has trouble using it, I would suggest that she uses an electric toothbrush with soft bristles. I would recommend that she gets one where she can connect it to her mobile device and she can play games on it. In addition, I would recommend that she uses one with her favorite princess so she is motivated to use it more. This will help get into her interproximal areas and I would also suggest that she uses an interdental brush since it requires less time to properly use.

**Do you feel more comfortable having a conversation with future patients about plaque, calculus and using toothbrush and flossing methods?**

After watching the videos and reading the textbook, I feel more comfortable to have a conversation with my future patients. I feel more confident to address my future patients about the importance of brushing and flossing to prevent plaque and calculus buildup. Since I have been learning about biofilm and calculus formation in multiple classes, I feel comfortable to educate my future patients about the importance of brushing and flossing daily to remove bacteria. Additionally, I feel more confident to show my patient the best toothbrushing method for their individual needs. This information is significant to answer any questions my future patients may have and to help give them tips on what products to purchase.

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