



Patients'
Awareness of the
Complications of
Body
Modifications and
the Role of RDH

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Background of Body Modifications



- Body modifications have been around for thousands of years.

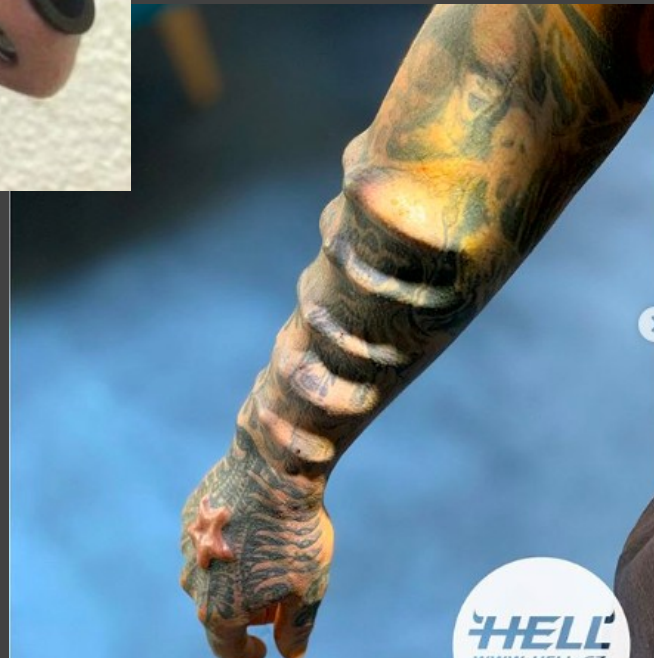
- The first known person with a tattoo dates back more than 5,200 years ago.

- One in three Americans had a tattoo in 2016.

- In the past, body modifications were solely associated with cultural or religious beliefs.



Body Modifications in the Present Day



- Nowadays, people use body modifications as self-expression. These body modifications are usually not done with trained medical professionals but with tattoo artists and piercers who do not know the risks and dangers of the modifications and are not trained to do it properly.
- We chose this topic because there are many dangers and risks associated with body modifications and as future dental hygienists it will be our job to educate our patients and hopefully minimize the amount of body modifications.



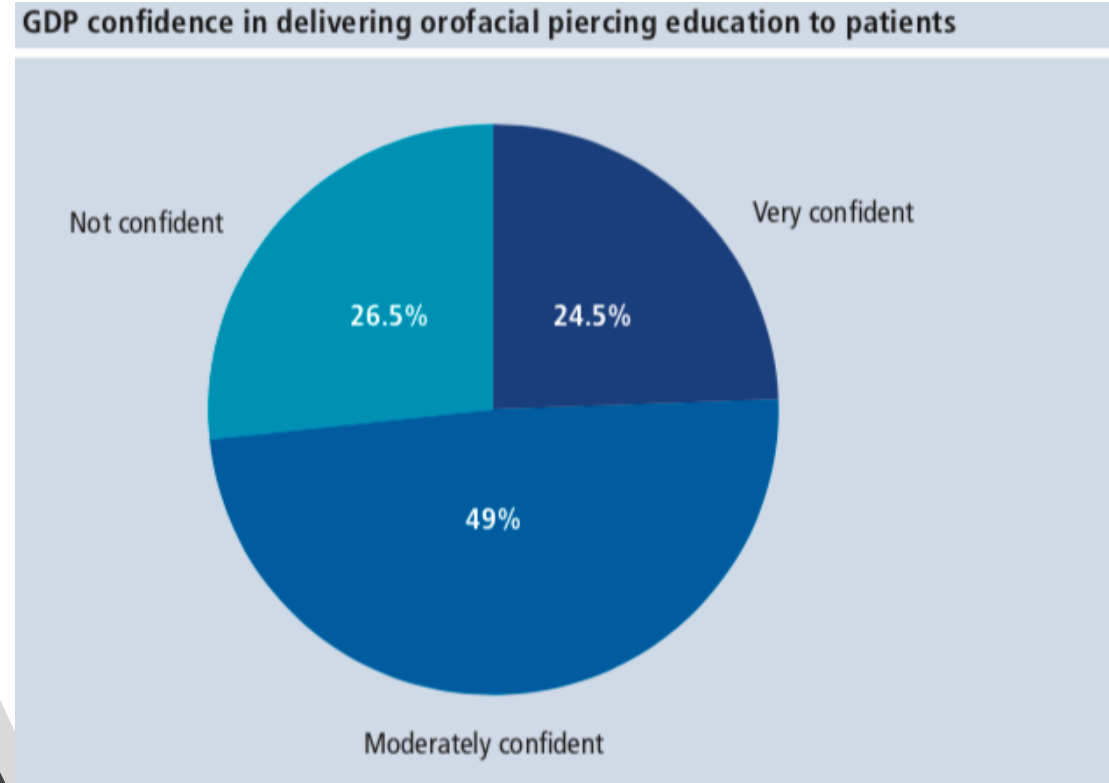
Oral piercings and their complications - How confident are we as a profession?"

- Oral piercing, a more recent trend, has caused an increase in emergency room visits in recent years. A study in the U.S. showed that annually 3,494 injuries associated with oral piercings resulted in emergency room visits due to complications.
- An observational study conducted by E.M. King, E. Brewer, and P. Brown et al took place in Wales, United Kingdom, and was published in The British Dental Journal in June 2018. The purpose of the survey was to understand the knowledge and attitudes of dentists' confidence level toward patients' education regarding the damage caused by oral piercings.
- They conducted the study through a multiple-choice question survey sent to 200 dentists across Wales with questions via email about how confident the dentists felt giving advice to their patients and warning them about complications from the oral piercing.



Results and Conclusion

- Based on the information presented in the article, it is clear that oral piercing even though it is a trend, can cause a lot of damage and sometimes permanent damage and the dentist should be knowledgeable regarding these complications.
- Only 24.5% of dentists were very confident discussing piercing complications.
- The authors concluded that only a small percentage of the dentists in the UK felt confident discussing the risk of having an oral piercing, and most of the dentists do not inform their patients as they do not have adequate knowledge on this issue.

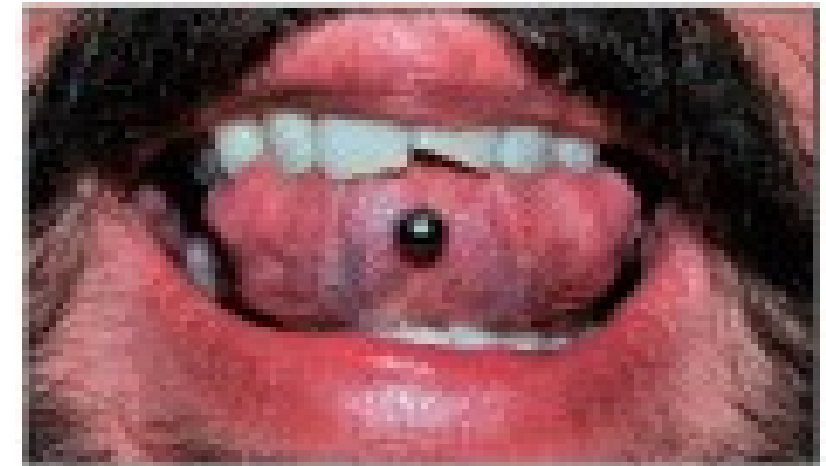


“Piercing and Oral Health: A Study on the Knowledge of Risks and Complications”

- Oral piercings are an ongoing fad that can cause many complications with a person’s oral and general health. Additionally, the majority of people are unaware of the risks it can have on one’s oral health. This study wanted to see the extent of the complications oral piercings can cause and the knowledge known about piercings by the general public.
- Francesco Covello, Camilla Salerno, Valentina Giovannini et al. conducted a study on 387 randomly selected individuals with oral piercings. They filled out a questionnaire that asked them about their piercings and their general oral health. Then, 70 of the individuals agreed to be further examined to observe their oral hygiene and their oral health.
- Patient’s response was that majority were not educated in the risks of oral piercings and some showed signs of gingivitis, recession, and tooth fractures because of the piercings.

“Piercing and Oral Health: A study on the knowledge of risks and complications”

- This study concluded that there is not enough awareness of the risks that an oral piercing can cause. The piercers themselves often do not warn their clients of the possible complications that can happen and they fail to educate the patient on the proper way to clean the area.
- The role of dental hygienists is to educate patients if they are contemplating getting piercings of the risks it can cause. Additionally, for patients who already have piercings, hygienists should teach them how to properly care for and maintain the area so it doesn't lead to more serious complications.



“Skin Care in the Tattoo Parlor: A Survey of Tattoo Artists in New York City”

- Brooke E. Rosenbaum, Emily C. Milam, Lauren Seo et al. conducted an online, survey-based study of licensed tattoo artists from NYC. The survey contacted 265 NYC tattoo studios for participation: 106 studios declined, 159 studios agreed, 90 artists completed it.
- Participants answered questions about their experience with unfavorable skin reactions related to tattoos, screening of pre-existing skin conditions before giving a tattoo and aftercare. Additionally, they asked them about their confidence with skincare education and questions related to tattoo correction/removal.



“Skin Care in the Tattoo Parlor: A Survey of Tattoo Artists in New York City”

- 92.8% of tattooists reported observing at least one adverse tattoo reaction, either related to a tattoo performed by themselves or by a different artist, during their careers. Approximately 76.3% of tattooists reported referring a client to a medical professional for care of an adverse tattoo reaction at least once.
- 90% reported being asked about the safety of getting a tattoo with a preexisting skin condition. 71% reported that they always ask customers about preexisting skin conditions before administering a tattoo. 84% always provides instructional tattoo aftercare handouts. 55.2% reported always looking for atypical moles on customers' skin while performing a tattoo.
- Non-medical professionals like tattoo artists may become a link between patients and health care professionals. One of their main tasks is to educate their customers about the risks of tattoos and aftercare.
- Majority of tattoo specialists are interested in education-related to skin conditions related to tattoos.

Role of the Dental Hygienist

- The practice of body modification has been around for centuries. Due to the increase of body modifications in the United States, dental hygienists should be familiar with practices of body modification from all around the world. Since we live in a diverse region, a dental hygienist should be familiar and be prepared for seeing all different types of body modification and the complications associated with it.
- It is important that a dental hygienist recognizes any kind of complications or sign of infections and make the patient aware by providing correct information with a discussion regarding the complications associated with the body modification.



Role of the Dental Hygienist

- To relay the right information to the patient and also to make awareness, a hygienist could create a brochure or leaflet about the importance of oral maintenance to prevent any infection or possible complication associated with oral piercing
- As a dental hygienist, we should do a complete assessment, review the medical history and document the modification in the extra/intraoral examination; stating the condition of the area and the surrounding soft and/or hard tissue.
- During the review of medical history and assessment, question the patient about the significance of the body modification they have. Additionally, we should look for any clues relating to the patient's mental status.



References

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