



Knowledge, Attitude and Practice on Oral Hygiene Measures among Adolescents in Urban Areas

*Ditty J Mary, Anand S, Dhanraj M

Saveetha Dental College and hospitals, Chennai, India.

*Corresponding author's E-mail:

Received: 05-07-2017; Revised: 22-08-2017; Accepted: 08-09-2017.

ABSTRACT

The aim of the study is to assess the knowledge oral hygiene practice among adolescents residing in urban areas. The current cross-sectional questionnaire survey was conducted to assess the knowledge of the adolescent people residing in urban area and various measures they practice to maintain oral hygiene. Sample size of the survey was 100. A questionnaire was distributed to the adolescents residing in the urban areas of Velachery. Most of the students residing in urban areas have knowledge about cleaning their tongues and teeth and the use of mouthwash except the knowledge about interdental aids. And most of them cleaned their teeth twice using tooth brush and tooth paste. The toothbrush with toothpaste is the most common oral hygiene aid used for cleaning teeth; it was observed that a greater number of students brushed their teeth twice daily.

Keywords: Attitude, knowledge, oral hygiene, students.

INTRODUCTION

India, sixth biggest country by area is the second most populous country. Factors contributing to the steady rise in prevalence of periodontal disease include poor oral -health awareness. Oral health knowledge is considered to be an essential prerequisite for health-related behavior. Although only a weak association exists between knowledge and behavior in cross-sectional studies,¹ there are studies that establish an association between knowledge and better oral health.¹⁻³ Dental hygiene is the science and practice of the recognition, treatment, and prevention of oral diseases. Good oral hygiene is the foundation for a healthy mouth and prevents 80% of all dental problems.⁴ Obeying the rules of proper oral hygiene are of primary importance in the prevention of dental caries and periodontal diseases. Unfortunately, oral hygiene practice is very low in our society. A survey in India suggested that there was an insufficient degree of education about oral health and that many children in the country did not even use a toothbrush, instead relied on traditional methods to keep their teeth clean.⁵ In a country like India, the awareness about the dental disease and their impact on general health and the need to safeguard oral health and hygiene should be given utmost importance because of the increased use of tobacco, improper eating habits and inefficient maintenance of oral hygiene.⁶ Professional students come across a great number of people of different age groups from different backgrounds in their day to day course of study hence with proper knowledge and oral health behavior they can act as role models for their family and community at large.

Thus, the aim of this study was to assess the knowledge, attitude and practices of oral hygiene among college students in Chennai city.

METHODOLOGY

A questionnaire was distributed among the adolescents residing in Chennai (Velachery) and was asked to fill it and return. Sample size of the study is 100. Total of 14 questions was included regarding the oral health practices among the adults questionnaire were explained whenever necessary, and the participants were given assurance regarding confidentiality of their responses and were requested to mark their answers and complete it individually. Student's knowledge, attitude, and practices were assessed by using a questionnaire which included the following:

- General information: About their Name, Age, Sex
- Knowledge: Oral health related knowledge on uses of interdental aids mouth wash etc.
- Attitude: Attitude toward the prevention of oral diseases, dental visits etc.
- Practices: Oral hygiene practices, mainly brushing and rinsing habits, frequency of dental visitst

RESULTS

The table represents the number of students who used to clean their teeth and tongue daily and also the number of people using mouth wash and the number of students who rinse their mouth after eating. In which 100 of them cleaned their teeth daily and around 84% of the students used to clean their tongue and 56% used mouth wash and 75% rinse their mouth after eating.



	Number of students who clean their teeth daily	Number of people who cleans their tongue	number of people using mouth wash	Numbers of students who rinse their mouth after eating	Number of students who knew about interdental aids	Those who have bleeding in their gums	those who clean their teeth professionally
Yes	100	84	56	75	44	57	48
No	Nil	16	44	25	56	43	52

Tooth brush and tooth powder	100%
Those who changed their tooth brush in 3 months	40%
those who brushed their teeth once daily	53%
Those who used combined way of brushing	60%

DISCUSSION

In the present study, most of the students knew at least the basic causes and prevention of dental caries and gum diseases. But knowledge regarding interdental aids was low. Most of the students demonstrated high awareness of the link between oral health and general health and the well being of the rest of the body might help in oral health care and oral self care practice among students, though a majority of the students knew that oral health contributes to esthetics. Over the past 20 years a significant amount of emphasis has been made on prevention of disease rather than the treatment aspect. Healthy teeth can last us a lifetime with the proper preventive dental care. Preventive oral health Knowledge, behavior, and its Practice are more important ways of keeping our teeth healthy. Hence in this study attempts were made to evaluate Knowledge, Attitude and Practice on oral hygiene measures on the population of the Chennai Velachery city.

In the questionnaire first question was Do you clean your teeth and it is glad to know that hundred out of hundred clean their teeth. And the next question was the mode of cleaning their teeth which is tooth brush and tooth paste for all of them. Next question was how often do you clean your teeth and almost 53% people cleaned it twice, only 3% more than twice and 44% once daily and none of them occasionally. The next question was regarding the type of tooth brush used and it seems that most of them used medium type than soft and hard type.

The next question was the brushing technique used and 60% used combined 15% of them used circular and horizontal method and only 10% used vertical. Next question was about the time span of tooth brush and it seems that most of them changed their tooth brush once in three months. Next question was regarding cleaning their tongues and 84% of them cleaned their tongue. Next question was do you rinse your mouth after eating and 75% of them does that. Next question was regarding the usage of mouth wash and 56% of the students use that.

Next question was about the knowledge of interdental aids and only 44% of them had knowledge on what interdental aids and 67% of the students use wooden toothpick and 12% use floss and 15% use interdental toothbrush and 6% doesn't use anything. The next question was regarding the bleeding of gums and around 57% have noticed it, and only 48% of the students have got their mouth cleaned professionally. The last question was regarding their visit to a dentist for cleaning their mouth and 26% visits once in six months and 23% once in three months and 24% once in a year and 16% once in two years and 11% doesn't visit a dentist at all.

CONCLUSION

The toothbrush with toothpaste is the most common oral hygiene aid used for cleaning teeth. It was observed that a greater number of students brushed their teeth twice daily. The study showed that students who had knowledge and positive attitude of oral health involved themselves in good practices of oral health maintenance. Oral health education program should be conducted with reinforcement, so that students can close the gap between knowledge and practice by changing their attitude from negative to positive. Effective oral health education and promotion programs are needed to improve oral health knowledge, attitude, and practices of the students. Most of the adolescents residing in urban areas has good knowledge about oral hygiene measures and maintain a satisfactory oral health status. But still many of them are not aware of the interdental cleaning and aids and need to be motivated to seek professional oral care periodically.

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Source of Support: Nil, **Conflict of Interest:** None.

