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## **Dental hygiene**

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Dental hygiene is essential to general health and well-being at every stage of life. A healthy mouth enables not only nutrition of the physical body, but also enhances social interaction and promotes self-esteem and feeling of well-being. The mouth serves as a window to the rest of the body, providing signals of general health disorder. For example, mouth lesion may be the first sign of HIV infection, pale and bleeding gums can be an indicator of skeletal osteoporosis and change in tooth appearance indicate bulimia or anorexia. Dental diseases are the most widespread chronic disease, despite being highly preventable. The common risk factor that dental diseases highly shares with other chronic diseases are diet, tobacco smoking, alcohol consumption, hygiene, injuries, control and stress, etc. Dental disease has been associated with number of systemic conditions. Though the biological interaction between it and other medical conditions are not fully understood, it is clear that major chronic disease namely cancer and heart disease share common risk factor. Dental conditions have an impact on overall health and disease. Bacteria from the mouth can cause infection in other part of the body when the immune system has been compromised by disease or medical treatment. Systemic conditions and their treatment are also known to impact on dental hygiene (e.g. reduce saliva flow, alter balance of microorganisms). Recognition that dental hygiene and general health are interlinked is essential for determining appropriate dental hygiene care programs and strategies at both individual and community level by adopting common risk factor approach for dental hygiene.

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## Conscious sedation: Ambulatory techniques for modern, in-office dental patient management

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Standards for conscious sedation techniques for the dental office have been developed for decades mostly in the US and the UK, and numerous publications have proven their efficacy and safety. Other studies have advocated the need for such techniques for the management of phobic and anxious patient regarding dental treatment. Sedation offers wide spectra of possibilities from hypnosis to deep sedation involving multi-drug techniques by adequately trained professionals. Conscious sedation has been defined as: "A technique in which the use of a drug or drugs produces a state of depression of the central nervous system enabling treatment to be carried out, but during which verbal contact with the patient is maintained throughout the period of sedation. The drugs and techniques used to provide conscious sedation for dental treatment should carry a margin of safety wide enough to render loss of consciousness unlikely. It is of fundamental importance that the level of sedation must be such that the patient remains conscious, and is able both to understand and respond to verbal commands." Two main techniques comply with this definition: inhalation sedation using nitrous oxide and oxygen, and single-drug intravenous administration of a titrated benzodiazepine. Proper use by trained, equipped and experimented dental professionals offers safety, efficacy and a tremendous level of patient satisfaction.

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