

# Common Dental Problems

Dr. Shifali. G

**ABSTRACT**

**According to the WHO, *Oral health is a state of being free from chronic mouth and facial pain, oral and throat cancer, oral sores, birth defects such as cleft lip and palate, periodontal (gum) disease, tooth decay and tooth loss, and other diseases and disorders that affect the oral cavity.* Oral health is the state of the mouth, teeth and orofacial structures that enables an individual to perform functions such as eating, chewing etc. Dental health and Oral health is an essential part of overall health and well-being of an individual. In immunocompromised individuals with poor oral hygiene, bacteria from mouth can enter the bloodstream and cause infection in other parts of the body. Some of the most common dental problems are Dental Caries, gum problems, root infections, sensitivity, discolouration of teeth, malocclusion and halitosis. Most dental problems are completely treatable and can be treated in their early stages. It is important to maintain good oral hygiene from early childhood to avoid most dental problems. Parents should make sure kids brush their teeth for at least 2 mins. Poor oral hygiene can cause increased level of bacteria which further leads to serious oral infections. Prevention is better than cure therefore, it is important to maintain good oral hygiene throughout ones life.**

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## CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

Dental problems arise due to lack of oral hygiene. Oral health is the state of being free from mouth and facial pain, oral infections, periodontal diseases, oral and throat cancer, and other diseases and disorders that limit an individuals capacity in smiling, speaking, chewing, biting and psychosocial well-being. Oral health is essential to general health and quality of life.

### ➤ *Structure of the Teeth*

A tooth consists of enamel, dentin, cementum, and pulp tissue. The part of the tooth exposed to the oral cavity is known as the *dental crown* and the portion below the dental crown is known as the *tooth root*.

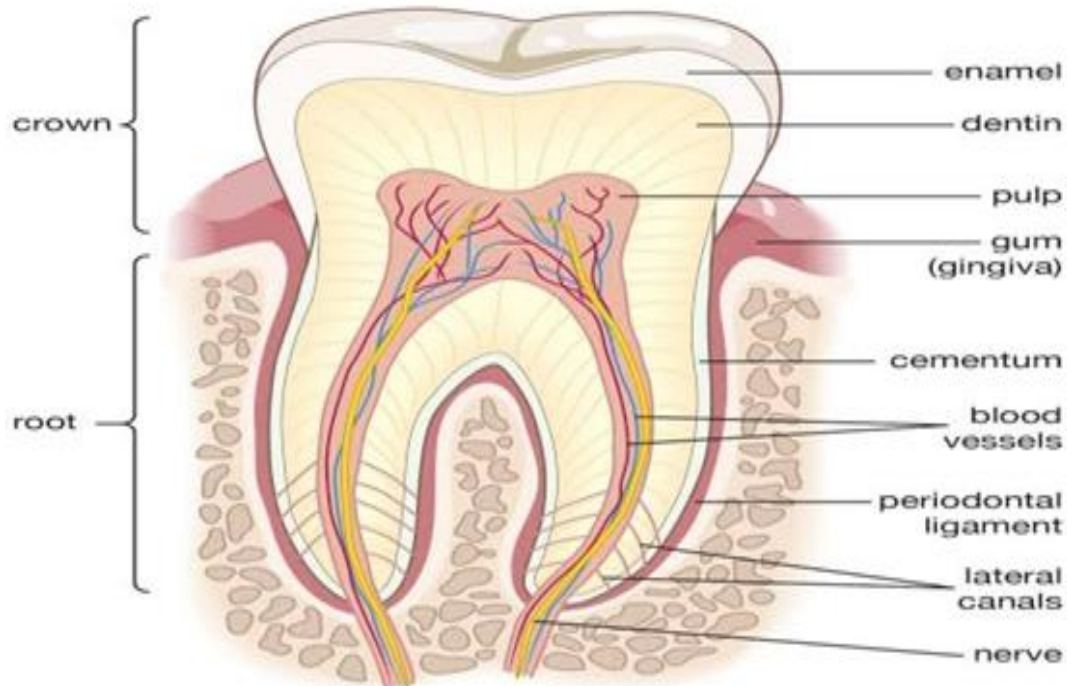


Fig 1 Structure of the Teeth

### • *Some of the Most Common Dental Problems are*

- ✓ Dental Caries
- ✓ Sensitivity
- ✓ Root infection
- ✓ Gum problems
- ✓ Stained teeth
- ✓ Halitosis
- ✓ Orthodontic problems
- ✓ Impacted tooth
- ✓ Supernumerary tooth
- ✓ Abrasion, Erosion, and Abfraction

## CHAPTER TWO DENTAL CARIES

Dental caries is defined as a microbiological disease of the hard structure of teeth, which results in localized demineralization of the inorganic portion and destruction of the organic substance of the tooth.

Dental caries is one of the most prevalent chronic disease worldwide.

➤ *Causes of Dental Caries*

- Susceptibility of tooth
- Poor dietary habits
- Poor oral hygiene
- Acid producing Bacteria
- Dry mouth
- Time



Fig 2 Causes of Dental Caries

➤ *Treatment*

Treatment of caries depends on how severe it is, treatment options include:

- In case of caries involving only enamel and dentin, RESTORATION is the main treatment option. Various materials are used for restoration such as dental amalgam, GIC, composite resin etc.
- In case of caries involving pulp tissue, Root Canal Treatment (RCT) is the treatment of option followed by placement of crown. This treatment is opted in order to preserve the natural tooth.
- In case of loss of tooth structure due to decay, the tooth in question is extracted.

### **CHAPTER THREE**

### **SENSITIVE TEETH**

Sensitivity in teeth refers to a common occurrence where the nerves are easily triggered by certain external stimuli, typically the result of worn out enamel or exposed tooth root.

➤ *Causes*

- Brushing rigorously
- Tooth grinding
- Gum diseases
- Cracked or chipped tooth
- Extensive caries
- dislodged fillings
- Gum recession

➤ *Treatment*

- Use Soft bristled brushes and avoid exerting too much force.
- Use Desensitizing toothpaste.
- Fluoride application.
- Root canal treatment.
- Use mouth guard at night if you have grinding habits.
- Reduce acidic drinks and sugary food.
- Have regular dental check-ups.

## CHAPTER FOUR GUM PROBLEMS

Gum problems aka Gingivitis is an inflammation of the gum caused by a bacterial infection. If left untreated it can destroy the bone that supports your teeth leading to periodontitis.



Fig 3 Gum Disease

### ➤ Causes

- Poor oral hygiene.
- Accumulation of plaque
- Hormonal changes
- Family history
- Smoking

### ➤ Treatment

- Professional dental cleaning aka Scaling and Root planning – Scaling removes plaque and bacteria from the tooth surface and beneath gums. Root planning removes the bacterial products produced by inflammation, smooths the root surfaces, discouraging further build-up of tartar and bacteria, and allows proper healing. The procedure may be performed using instruments, a laser or an ultrasonic device(3).
- Gingivitis usually clears up after a thorough dental cleaning.
- Maintain good oral hygiene.

## CHAPTER FIVE STAINED TEETH

There are many reasons for darkening of teeth. It may be due to disturbance in tooth enamel development or due to certain lifestyle habits.

### ➤ *Causes*

Tooth Stain due to lifestyle habits

- Poor dental hygiene.
- Certain drinks such as coffee, tea, wine, cola etc.
- Smoking
- Chewing tobacco
- Aging
- High fluoride levels in water.
- Medications such as tetracycline and soxycucline can affect the enamel formation in children under the age of 8. Antihistamines, antihypertensive medications can also cause teeth discoloration.



Fig 4 Cause of Discoloration

### ➤ *Treatment*

- Maintaining Good Oral hygiene.
- Avoid food and drinks that can stain your teeth.
- In-home whitening agents such as strips
- In-office whitening procedure, bleaching your teeth.
- Veneers – A thin shell of material over the anterior teeth.



## CHAPTER SIX MALOCCLUSION

Malocclusion is one of the most common dental problems. When left untreated it can cause dental problems such as decayed teeth, developing gum diseases, loosening of teeth etc. There are 3 Classes of malocclusion

- *Class 1* malocclusion is the most common. The bite is normal, but the upper teeth slightly overlap the lower teeth.
- *Class 2* malocclusion, called retrognathism or overbite, occurs when the upper jaw and teeth severely overlap the bottom jaw and teeth.
- *Class 3* malocclusion, called prognathism or underbite, occurs when the lower jaw protrudes or juts forward, causing the lower jaw and teeth to overlap the upper jaw and teeth.

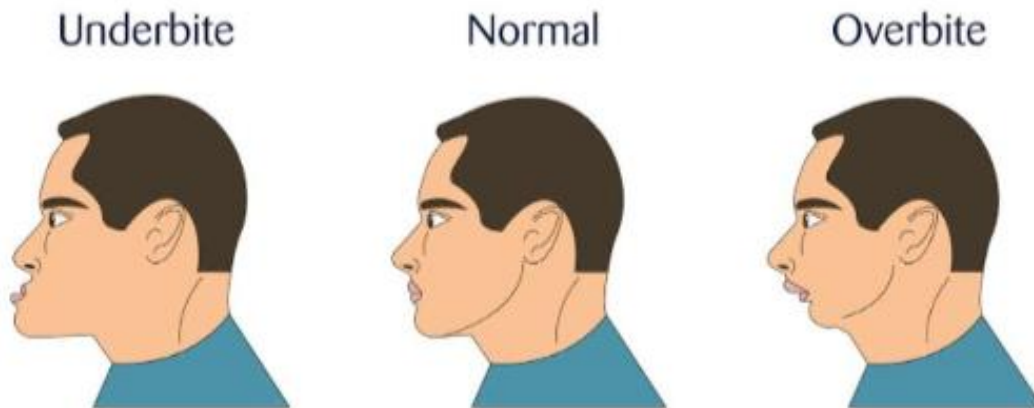


Fig 5 Classes of Malocclusion

➤ *Types of Malocclusion*

- Crowding
- Excessive spacing
- Open bite
- Over bite
- Cross bite
- Underbite
- Overjet

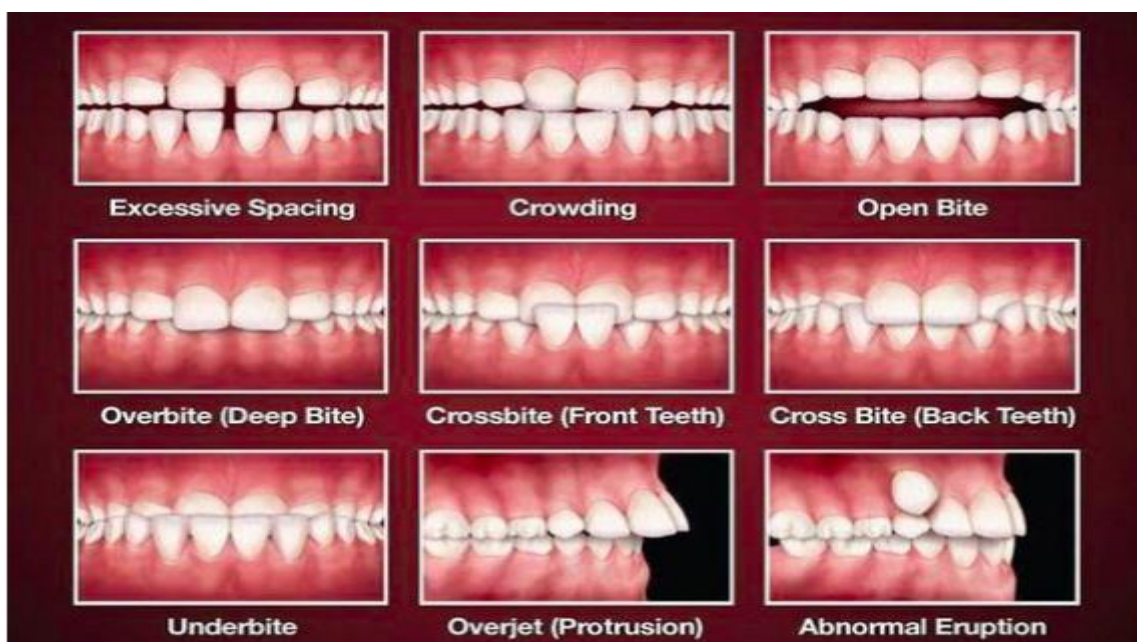


Fig 6 Types of Malocclusion

➤ *Causes*

- Cleft lip and cleft palate.
- Prolonged use of pacifier after the age of 3.
- Prolonged use of bottle feeding.
- Tumors in jaw.
- Supernumerary teeth.
- Certain oral habits such as mouth breathing, thumb sucking,

➤ *Treatment*

There are 3 types of malocclusion and depending on type of malocclusion, your orthodontist will recommend different treatment, such as

- Braces to correct the position of your teeth.
- Invisalign.
- Removal of supernumerary teeth to correct crowding.
- Realignment of teeth using dental appliances or retainers.
- Orthodontic Surgery for correction of deformities of the jaw such as overbite or underbite.
- Maxillomandibular advancement to move upper and lower jaw forward.

## CHAPTER SEVEN HALITOSIS

Halitosis is a medical term for bad breath(6).

*Halitosis is also termed as fetor ex ore or fetor oris. It is a foul or offensive odor emanating from the oral cavity.*

Carranza's clinical periodontology 10<sup>th</sup> edition

Halitosis is a widespread condition affecting approximately 1 out of 4 people around the world(6).

### ➤ Causes

- Poor Oral Hygiene.
- Eating certain foods such as onions, garlicks and spices can cause bad breath.
- Smoking and chewing tobacco products leads to gum diseases, another source of bad breath
- As a side effect of certain medical treatment such as chemotherapy,
- Saliva helps cleanse mouth and removes particles that cause bad odor. Lack of saliva leads to a condition known as *Xerostomia* or dry mouth.
- Certain medications such as antihistamines, antidepressants, diuretics, anticholinergics, antipsychotics, amphetamines etc. can lead to dry mouth
- Chronic reflux of stomach acids can be associated with bad breath.
- As a side effect of certain diseases and infections such as HIV, Alzheimers disease, Diabetes, hypertension, anemia etc.

### ➤ Treatment

- Maintain good oral hygiene
- Brush your teeth twice daily and floss
- Use mouthwashes.
- Avoid smoking and chewing tobacco
- Brush tongue to avoid bacteria, food and dead cells build up on your tongue.
- Drink plenty of water
- Use sugar-free chewing gum to stimulate production of saliva.
- Avoid onions, garlicks, spicy foods, and alcohol.

## **CHAPTER EIGHT**

### **TIPS TO MAINTAIN GOOD ORAL HYGIENE**

- Visit your dentist once every 3-6 months
- Brush your teeth twice daily.
- Use soft bristled brush
- Use fluoride toothpaste.
- Replace your toothbrush once every 3-4 months
- Brush/ scrape your tongue.
- Use chlorhexidine mouth wash.

## **CHAPTER NINE CONCLUSION**

Good oral hygiene affects overall health of an individual. It affects the individuals self esteem and quality of life. Poor oral health can also affect the jaw, face, throat, leading to difficulty in speech, eating, chewing, drinking ect and has a profound effect on general health. The earlier good oral hygiene habits such as brushing twice daily, using mouthwashes, flossing and scraping tongue etc. are instilled in an individual, the better. Dental problems when left untreated for a long period of time can worsen and can cause pain and lead to much serious infections. Therefore, An individual should visit their dentist atleast once every three to six months for general check-up.

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