



## Dentistry and Oral Health

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One of the most neglected areas of health care amongst the Indians is the oral cavity. Lack of awareness of the fact that the mouth is the window to the body is the key reason.

A skilled clinician can peep through this window and diagnose many diseases hiding in one's body. As many diseases can be diagnosed this way in their initial stage, proper patient management ensuring good future health can be done. In diseases like HIV-AIDS the lesions first pop up in the mouth.

A simple and common complaint like bad breath could be a warning sign to a more serious liver ailment and not just lack of proper oral hygiene.

A person who does not maintain good oral hygiene can expose his body to systemic illness. A patient with periodontitis is at a higher risk for bacterial endocarditis, MI and lack of ability to control DM than a patient who meticulously maintains his oral hygiene.

Apart from this, Saliva is coming up as a reliable diagnostic tool for cancer, bone diseases etc. Soon saliva might overthrow blood samples in diagnosis. Proper awareness regarding the mouth's role in overall health of an individual should be popularised.

Maintenance of good oral health is an integral part of the human functions and it does help in improving the quality of life.

Since ages, education has been evaluated in terms of knowledge, attitude and perception. So, main focus of the dentistry should be in the improvement of the oral health status, indirectly resulting in the social and mental health enhancement. As they say, prevention is always better than cure. So, in depth knowledge of oral sciences is essential for preventing the onset of any infectious disease, any disfigurement of teeth and disturbance of occlusion.

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