



Pediatric Dentistry Amid COVID-19 Pandemic

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The COVID-19 pandemic had made disastrous impacts and aftereffects in different sectors of our society. The virus had not confined to the health sector alone, its impact has fallen as a logged hurdle to the world economy thus creating a greater havoc to humanity [1]. Dentistry too is not exempted from the clutches of COVID-19 outbreak. The pandemic has forced every individual in adapting in new lifestyle changes and habits for chances of better resistance survival against this deadly pandemic. Pediatric Dentistry practices also required sequential and orderly modifications which could be employed to both the dentist and the patients in the routine dental practice considering the fact that the dental personnel are prone to COVID-19 exposure through saliva and aerosols from the working environment. COVID-19 pandemic is expected to continue for a much longer time than expected. Until the pandemic settles down, dental treatment will be sought out only in times of emergency as when needed [2].

Dental aerosols are considered to be one of the most important potential sources for COVID-19 transmission [3]. In India, the health regulatory bodies including the Dental Council of India in association with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (Government of India) had designed clinically applicable guidelines for dental practitioners to continue their practice amid this outraging pandemic scenario. The modified clinical practices and settings concerning dental practice for pediatric patients in accordance with COVID-19 affect the behavioral modifications and guidance approaches that has been routinely executed for managing pediatric dental patients. These challenges could lead to deterioration and back lagging in maintaining a good rapport between the dental personnel and the children thereby declining the quality and success rate of dental care and treatment provided to pediatric dental patients.

To prevent the exhausting spread of infection, pediatric dentists must maintain personal hygiene. It lies on the hands of the Pediatric Dentist to make the child patient feel confident, relaxed and safe about the treatment procedure. In this technologically informative era, patients have a higher awareness of the treatment and associated risks [4]. Hence it becomes an undeniable responsibility of the Pediatric Dentist to explain in detail the scheduled treatment plan, expected outcomes and cost in advance to the child's parents or guardians as this would avoid any doubts and provide a clear well-defined outline to the parents.

The various strategical modifications which can be adapted include 1. Tele-consultations and screening 2. Pre-appointment consultations 3. Dental history and Triage [5]. Adaptation of these facilities along with the assistance of technology will thus help both the patients and the pediatric dentist to plan the most appropriate amid this pandemic scenario thereby thriving our way safely and accurately fulfilling the patient demands. With COVID-19 now being the new normal, pertaining practices and management will continue until the entire pandemic scenario ceases. Further progress and with ease of restrictions in the public scenario, Pediatric Dentistry is also found to extend new approaches highlighting preventive treatment strategies as the prime mode of treatment.

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