

**Mini Review***Copyright © All rights are reserved by Salwa Mekled*

Stress Among Dentists

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Abstract

The present study is to review stress among dentists. This review discusses several factors that can cause stress for dental professionals, and the impact of stress on the general health of dental professionals. This review found several mechanisms to cope with workplace related stress, however more research is needed.

Keywords: Stress; Dental professionals; Stress management

Introduction

Stress in the workplace is considered the worldwide health epidemic of the 21st century [1]. Dentistry could be a stressful profession that can affect the whole health [2]. Some studies revealed that women were experiencing more stress than men. The reason could be due to women sensitivity and probably they could be affected by environmental stress factors easier [3].

Many factors at work can lead to stress. Some of these are: clinical work, adverse working conditions, working with anxious patients, time pressures, an obligation to continuously work on additional training to allow the dentist to perform tasks more effectively [1]. General practitioners must be able to perform different dental treatment procedures for which they may be unprepared. Most of general practitioners are working in public clinics where dentists must work under constant time pressure and work as quickly as they can to see as many patients as possible [4]. Dentists indicated running behind schedule, heavy workload, late and anxious patients are the most intense stressors in their work [5].

Discussion

According to studies, stress related to dentistry can include lower back pain, musculoskeletal complaints, gastrointestinal disorders, and headaches [2]. The prevalence of musculoskeletal complaints among dentists is high and well documented [6]. It can even lead to suicide among dentists [2]. About 20% of the dentists reported decreased work productivity due to pain and discomfort, and over 6% reported poor-to-moderate work ability. Productivity loss related to poor sleep quality, a high amount of stress, and multi-site pain [7].

Preventive measurements at the workplace to maintain high work productivity should include measures to promote good musculoskeletal health among dentists. This should reduce the risk of high, persistent stress levels, and frequent work-related pain. These symptoms must be identified early and taken seriously as pain is a strong predictor for persistent stress and future inconvenience [7].

To cope with stress more effectively, dentists should learn how to concentrate to other things and engage in sport activities (aerobic exercise), relaxing activities (meditation, yoga) starting early as being a student [8]. Stress management and coping behaviors should be included in the dental curriculum to avoid physical and psychological problems that may occur because of occupational stress. Workshops, seminars, and education programs on occupational stress for clinical dental staff should be organized on a regular basis [9].

Conclusion

Dentists can express work related stress that can diminish their work efficiency by time. Monitoring the mental and physical status of dental professionals is important to reduce the risk of burnout. Stress management techniques should be recommended for all dental professionals. Techniques for stress management can include resting, meditation, Yoga and practicing sport. Some dental associations provide support groups, and well-being programs to help dental professionals cope with work related stress. The necessity to include stress management in the dental curriculum has increased due to the future impact on the dental professionals.

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Conflict of Interest

Author declares no conflict of interest.

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