FDI POLICY STATEMENT

Musculoskeletal Disorders and Dental Practice

Adopted by the FDI General Assembly:
Octobre 2007, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Due to high prevalence and their impact on life, health and productivity musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) present important hazards for dentists. This FDI Policy Statement is intended to draw the attention of dentists to the multifactorial etiology of these disorders and emphasize the importance of prevention.

For musculoskeletal health, dentists should not ignore the possibility and severe consequences of MSDs. They therefore need to recognize the particular importance and value of:

- early-recognition of the diverse signs and symptoms of MSDs
- acknowledgement of and the wide variety of associated risk factors such as the:
    - physical work-associated (e.g. deviated postures, long work hours, non-ergonomic equipment/tools, etc.),
    - psychological work-associated (e.g. time pressures, financial matters, etc.),
    - individual (e.g. smoking, weight gain, lack of physical exercise, etc.), and
    - non-work related
- realizing that most MSDs are preventable, either by avoidance or modification of many of the risk factors
- recognizing prevention as the most efficient measure to avoid MSDs and the need for multiple preventive interventions (e.g. educational efforts, modification of behaviour, natural work postures, appropriate office design and work patterns, correct selection and use of equipment/tools, application of sound ergonomic programmes and basic health and safety measures at work places, maintenance of physical fitness, regular medical check-ups, etc.)
- being aware of the potential of most MSDs to occur, and recur, in any member of the dental team, and therefore the need for continuity of all preventive efforts and systematic review of their efficiency
- acknowledging the various unclear aspects of MSDs, lack of evidence to support a single intervention as a universal application, and that the effectiveness of any intervention to depend on individual circumstances
- the particular importance of seeking appropriate medical care for suspected disorders and avoiding self-treatment with habit-forming medication

KEYWORDS

Musculoskeletal, noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), prevention, risk factors

REFERENCES

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