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Caries prevention in children: An evidence based tool kit (A model based on the experience in the Middle East)

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Caries is the most chronic infectious disease of childhood; despite the fact that it is totally preventable. With the advent of innovations in dentistry, there is an increasing shift from the classic “drill and fill” surgical model of caries management towards the biological approach of understanding the aetiology, prevention and occurrence of caries and managing it accordingly.

Consequently, there are many paradigm shifts for dealing with caries in young ones. Successful prevention is based on an individualized/customized prevention protocol rather than the previous model of “one size fits all” approach of caries management. The multi-factorial nature of caries presents a challenge to all clinicians dealing with children in their early years of life. Caries prevalence globally is widely decreasing. However, in the Middle East though, particularly in the UAE, incidence is on the rise affecting a high percentage of the population. Some research links caries in early childhood to many risk factors including a low socio-economic status, faulty dietary factors, or to parenting with poor attitudes towards oral health- among other etiological factors. However, risk determinants vary in this population. For preventing caries, there is a wealth of evidence supporting the use of some cost effective tools; if implemented properly, the caries experience can decrease in the region. The clinician should keep in mind existing barriers to parents receiving preventive advice to tackle them better. There are many evidence based tools to use in the office. Customized prevention plans start with assessing a child’s caries risk and his individual susceptibility to caries. Increasing fluoride availability, improving oral hygiene behavior, fissure sealing at risk fissures and assessing the diet and modifying it are tools present in our evidence based tool kit to provide effective prevention to our patients. The efficacy of use of all these tools is well documented in decreasing caries incidence in primary and permanent dentitions.

Biography

Yasmin Kottait specializes in Pediatric Dentistry and is an Instructor of Pediatric Dentistry at European University College and Manager at Royal College Membership Unit. She received a Masters’ degree in Pediatric Dentistry and a Higher Diploma in Paedodontics from Dental Public Health & Community in Egypt. She was awarded a Diploma of Membership of the Faculty of Dentistry (MFDS) from the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh, UK. She is currently an MFDS examiner. She offers preparatory courses at EUC for dentists aspiring to become members in the Royal College of Surgeons of the United Kingdom, including Edinburgh, London, Glasgow and Ireland.

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