

Dental Caries Prevention: The Physician's Role in Child Oral Health

Systematic Evidence Review

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Reviews

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DENTAL CARIES PREVENTION: THE PHYSICIAN S ROLE IN CHILD ORAL HEALTH

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Createspace, United States, 2013. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 279 x 216 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.Issues of oral health in children revolve almost exclusively around dental caries. In the U.S., dental caries is the most common chronic childhood disease, and its treatment is the most prevalent unmet health need in children. A substantial portion of caries lesions can be prevented; indeed, the incidence of this disease has declined among school-age children and adults in the past three decades. However, incidence among preschool children has not declined at a similar rate over this same time period. Dental caries is an infectious disease that can occur when cariogenic bacteria colonize a tooth surface in the presence of dietary carbohydrates, especially refined sugars. The bacteria metabolize the carbohydrates, producing lactic acid, which over time demineralizes the tooth structure. The earliest visible manifestation of dental caries is the appearance of a demineralized area on the tooth surface, which presents either as a small white spot on a smooth surface or a pit or fissure. At this stage, a caries lesion is usually reversible. If oral conditions do not change, demineralization will continue with the eventual result that the tooth surface loses its natural contour and a cavity develops. At this stage, restorative treatment is necessary to prevent the continuation of the caries process, which if left untreated will eventually result in pulpitis and ultimately tooth loss. Progression of individual caries lesions is typically slow, but it can be extremely rapid in a small proportion of individuals and especially in primary teeth, which have thinner enamel. Because dental caries is a chronic disease of microbial origin, modified by diet, the elimination of active caries lesions through treatment does not necessarily mean that the disease has been eradicated. An...



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