

Editorial

Pandemic and Prosthodontics

The Global Pandemic outbreak of Coronavirus has badly hit all global sectors including Dentistry. In fact Prosthodontics hasn't been spared at all since most of Prosthodontic treatments were not considered essential dental emergencies. The prosthodontic treatment needs for patients were therefore neglected during the past 12-18 months due to Covid -19. Since the risks of the disease was more for geriatric patients, this population was more hesitant to visit dental hospitals and clinics for their prosthodontic rehabilitation. Many older populations are now in a greater need for proper prosthodontic rehabilitation. Patients who were unable to visit their dentists have been managing their partial or fully edentulous states with either no prosthesis or their old prosthesis which now require immediate repair or maintenance work, and some may even need newer ones.

As in many countries, the geriatric population in our country were also given a priority for vaccination and have now been partially or even fully vaccinated. It is now time for them to gradually make visits to their prosthodontists / dentists to get their oral health examination and assessments for proper rehabilitation of their prosthodontic needs. This population, although still susceptible to infections needs to be encouraged for safer dental visits by properly educating them with the basic guidelines for their visits.

Although dental health care providers are at a higher risk than other health care workers, it is up to us dental surgeons to keep our patients, colleagues, and staff members safe and healthy especially during our dental practice. As prosthodontists we will be constantly making new prostheses, repairing, and adjusting existing dentures and other prostheses etc. Furthermore not only us, but our dental assistants who handle our patients' impressions and instruments, our lab technicians who handle the prosthesis fabrication also need to be well educated regarding the risks involved. Various international and national dental associations and societies have come up with updated guidelines for safety measures during dental treatments and it is up to us to follow these guidelines strictly and seriously to keep our patients, colleagues, staff and even our families safe from this disease. It is true that following these guidelines does come as a cost, i.e. the cost of more expensive infection control measures like sanitizers & PPE's, more frequent and better sterilization methods and equipment's. The ever increasing material and running costs of fabrication of prosthesis etc is another matter of importance. Lastly, after the Covid -19 outbreak, it has become very important for our government to play an essential and major role in the healthcare sector. As in most developed countries, our country's healthcare authorities might also need to negotiate on lowering drug, medical/dental equipment, and hospital/clinic costs so that dental healthcare benefits can directly be utilized by the country's population to benefit therefrom.

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