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Research Article

KNOWLEDGE ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE AMONG THE DENTAL PRACTITIONERS REGARDING THE PRESCRIPTION OF HERBAL MOUTHWASHES

Sowndarya B., Dhanraj and Rakshagan

Department of Prosthodontics, Saveetha Dental College and Hospitals,
Saveetha University

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ABSTRACT

Background: Mouthrinses are widely used as adjuncts to oral hygiene and in the delivery of active agents to the teeth and gums. The ability of these rinses to influence plaque formation and to alter the course of gingival inflammation has been extensively studied. Herbal mouthwashes are the type of mouthrinse that use the extracts from plants with favourable refreshing properties. This study mainly focuses on the knowledge and attitude among the dental practitioners regarding the herbal mouthwashes.

Aim: To assess the Knowledge Attitude Practice among the Dental Practitioners regarding the prescription of Herbal Mouthwashes.

Materials and Methods: This is a cross sectional study conducted among the dental practitioners through a questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of 14 questions and was circulated among the dental practitioners. The sample size of the study was 100 and the results were tabulated accordingly.

Result: This survey was conducted among 100 general dental practitioners. The survey population was sufficient enough to reach a conclusion regarding the knowledge of dentists about the usage and uses of herbal mouthwashes. The results showed that around 61% of the dental practitioners ask their patients to use the herbal mouthwashes twice daily. Being aware of the benefits of the herbal mouthwashes, 38% of the dentists prescribes the herbal mouthwashes too often to keep the oral cavity healthy on a regular basis and Herbal mouthwashes are prescribed for Halitosis (45%), and 75 % of the dentists find herbal mouthwashes beneficial, and 58% of the dentists are aware of all the herbal mouthwashes commercially available.

Conclusion: From the study it is so evident that the present day dentists are much aware and prefer herbal mouthwashes than chemical mouthwashes. With the increasing toxicity in the chemical drugs it is better to opt out for herbal mouthwashes. Because herbal mouthwashes are less toxic, have less side effects and are affordable too.

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INTRODUCTION

Choosing herbal mouthwashes over one that is alcohol-based is more effective as a long-term therapy for bad breath and optimal oral health because Tooth & Gums Tonic contains essential oils with powerful antimicrobial qualities for treating the underlying cause rather than merely providing temporary relief. Alcohol-free mouthwashes also called mouth rinses and tonics help to maintain the natural balance of saliva. This "balance" is critical not only for breaking down starches and flushing out bacteria, but also for assisting in the body's natural digestive process. In addition, alcohol dries out the mucous membranes of the mouth, which can exacerbate bleeding gums and lead to increased tooth and gum

sensitivity^[1]. Natural mouth rinses containing essential oils and herbal extracts can provide antimicrobial and connective tissue rebuilding properties, which can substantially strengthen your healing abilities and overall oral health. Essential oils have long been recommended for their therapeutic benefits in dental care because they help prevent infection, bad breath, and gum disease without the harmful side effects that are associated with commercial mouthwashes.^[2]

The most common contents of the herbal mouthwash are as follows

- Aloe vera has a soothing and anti-inflammatory effect.^[3]

*Corresponding author: **Sowndarya B**

Department of Prosthodontics, Saveetha Dental College and Hospitals, Saveetha University

- Calendula (*Calendula officinalis*) has soothing, anti-inflammatory properties that help heal irritated, tender gums. It also has a mild antiseptic action.^[4]
- Echinacea (*Echinacea spp.*), an immune-stimulating herb, helps combat infection; it is anti-inflammatory and antiviral.^[5]
- Myrrh (*Commiphora molmol*) has antimicrobial and astringent properties that help to tighten the gums. It is considered one of the best herbs for healing bleeding gums and mouth ulcers, and helps fight the bacteria that cause tooth decay and gum disease.^[6]
- Neem (*Azadirachta indica*), long considered a top antibacterial herb in Ayurvedic healing, helps prevent plaque. Ayurveda, a form of traditional medicine originating in India, is practiced in the western world, including the United States, as a form of alternative or complementary medicine.^[7]
- Sage (*Salvia officinalis*) has strong astringent properties, making it a favorite herb for tightening the gums and soothing a sore mouth.^[8]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The current study is a cross sectional survey where a questionnaire consisting of 15 questions were distributed to 100 dentists irrespective of their super specialty of dentistry and the results were further evaluated.

RESULTS

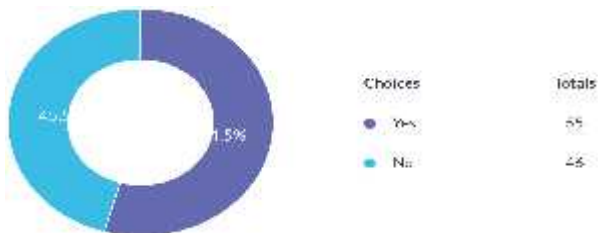


Figure 1 Number of people using herbal mouthwash

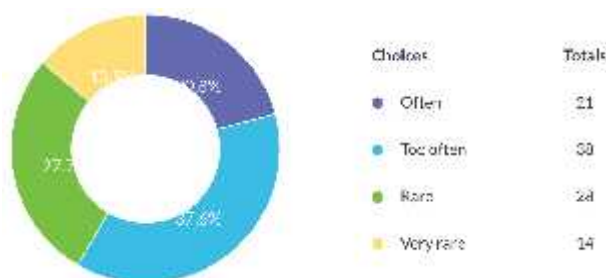


Figure 2 frequency of a dentist prescribing a herbal mouthwash



Figure 3 number of Dentists who think herbal mouthwash is beneficial



Figure 4 Reasons why dentists prescribe herbal mouthwash



Figure 5 number of dentists knowing the indication of herbal mouth wash

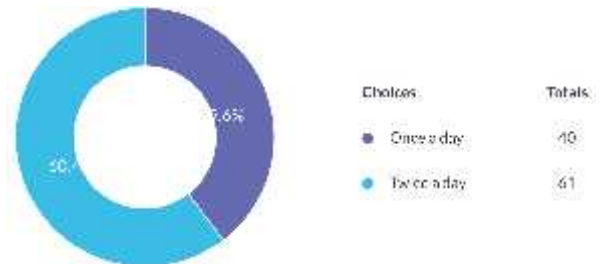


Figure 6 Daily usage of herbal mouthwash

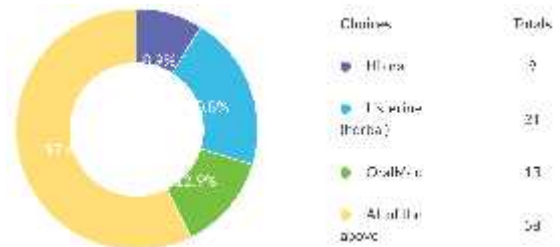


Figure 7 The commonly used herbal mouthwash

DISCUSSION

This survey was conducted among 100 general dental practitioners. The survey population was sufficient enough to reach a conclusion regarding the knowledge of dentists about the usage and uses of herbal mouthwashes. The results showed that around 61% of the dental practitioners ask their patients to use the herbal mouthwashes twice daily. Being aware of the benefits of the herbal mouthwashes, 38% of the dentists prescribe the herbal mouthwashes too often to keep the oral cavity healthy on a regular basis and Herbal mouthwashes are prescribed for Halitosis (45%), and 75% of the dentists find herbal mouthwashes beneficial, and 58% of the dentists are aware of the herbal mouthwashes commercially available. There has been many other KAP surveys conducted regarding the awareness of oral hygiene and the use of interdental aids. Dental practitioners should be a good example of positive oral

health attitudes and behavior to their families, patients and friends. In general, they have been found to be motivated about maintaining a good oral health. Self reported oral hygiene practices among Indian dental students and differences of study were evaluated among the dental professionals and it was found that the knowledge regarding the oral hygiene was good but still not greater than the knowledge possessed by the international practitioners. The knowledge and the awareness regarding the usage is possible only with conducting frequent camps and seminars on how important is to keep our oral cavity healthy and how can we protect and maintain without exposing ourselves to many chemical products.

This online survey showed how aware the dental practitioners are regarding the most sought after oral hygiene aid. This study also signifies the Dental practitioners compassion towards their patients to avoid chemical mouthwashes and prefer herbal mouthwashes instead of chemical mouthwashes.

CONCLUSION

Herbal mouthwash is a very beneficial and should be considered as a replacement for chemical mouthwash due to its extensive advantages and less side effects. More awareness should be spread among the people by the dental community. From the study it is so evident that the present day dentists are much aware and prefer herbal mouthwashes than chemical mouthwashes. With the increasing toxicity in the chemical drugs it is better to opt out for herbal mouthwashes. Because herbal mouthwashes are less toxic, have less side effects and are affordable too. Even though dentists are much aware about the herbal mouthwashes, commercial availability of herbal mouthwashes are limited which has to be increased than the chemical mouthwashes.

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