Policy on intraoral and perioral piercing

Originating Council
Council on Clinical Affairs

Review Council
Council on Clinical Affairs

Adopted
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Reviewed
2003

Purpose
The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) recognizes the importance of educating the public and health professionals on the health implications of oral and perioral piercings. The use of intraoral jewelry on and piercings of oral and perioral tissues have been gaining popularity among adolescents and young adults. Oral piercings involving the tongue, lips, cheeks and uvula have been associated with several conditions. These pathological conditions range from including pain, infection, scar formation, and tooth fractures, to metal hypersensitivity reactions, localized periodontal disease, speech impediment, and nerve damage. Infection. Potential infection sites can lead to tissue hyperplasias. Life threatening complications associated with oral piercings have been reported including bleeding, edema and airway obstruction. Unregulated piercing parlors and techniques have been identified by the National Institutes of Health as a possible vector for disease transmission (i.e., hepatitis, tetanus, tuberculosis) and as a cause of bacterial endocarditis in susceptible patients. 

Methodology
This policy statement was based on a MEDLINE search (Keywords: body piercing, oral piercing) of relevant articles from the dental and medical literature.

Background/literature review
Piercing has oral health implications and the use of intraoral jewelry on and piercings of oral and perioral tissues has been gaining popularity among adolescents and young adults. Oral piercings involving the tongue, lips, cheeks and uvula have been associated with several conditions. These pathological conditions range from including pain, infection, scar formation, and tooth fractures, to metal hypersensitivity reactions, localized periodontal disease, speech impediment, and nerve damage. Infection. Potential infection sites can lead to tissue hyperplasias. Life threatening complications associated with oral piercings have been reported including bleeding, edema and airway obstruction. Unregulated piercing parlors and techniques have been identified by the National Institutes of Health as a possible vector for disease transmission (i.e., hepatitis, tetanus, tuberculosis) and as a cause of bacterial endocarditis in susceptible patients.
Policy statement

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) strongly opposes the practice of piercing intraoral and perioral tissues and use of jewelry on intraoral and perioral tissues due to the potential for pathological conditions and sequelae associated with these practices.

References


