

Policy on Infection Control

Review Council

Council on Clinical Affairs

Latest Revision

2014

Purpose

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) recognizes the importance of infection control policies, procedures, and practices in dental health care settings in order to prevent disease transmission from patient to care provider, from care provider to patient, and from patient to patient.

Methods

This policy was originally developed by the Infectious Disease Control Subcommittee and adopted in 1989. This document is an update from the last revision in 2009. An electronic database search was conducted using the terms: dentistry infection control AND health care, and infection control AND dental; fields: all; limits: within the last 10 years; English; humans; comparative study, meta-analysis, multicenter study, systematic reviews, and validation study. The search returned 34 articles that matched the criteria. The articles were evaluated by title and/or abstract and relevance to dental care for children and adolescents. Three citations were chosen from this method and from references within selected articles.

Background

The application of standard universal precautions regarding infection control during dental treatment is paramount. The environment in which dental care is delivered impacts both patient and provider safety. Health care professionals should remain knowledgeable in how to reduce exposure and contamination risks to infectious materials. This would include body substances, contaminated supplies, equipment, environmental surfaces, water, and air. Some infection control practices routinely used by health-care professionals cannot be rigorously evaluated by clinical trials for ethical and logistical reasons.¹

Policy statement

The AAPD acknowledges the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Guidelines for Infection Control in the Dental Health-Care Setting—2003¹, Guidelines for Disinfection and Sterilization in Healthcare Facilities—2008², and Updated CDC Recommendations for the Management of Hepatitis B Virus-infected Health Care Providers and Students—2012³ as in-depth reviews of infection control measures for dental settings and supports the strategies therein. Aware that some recommendations are based only on suggestive evidence or theoretical rationale, and because many concerns regarding infection control in the dental setting remain unresolved, the AAPD encourages dental practitioners to follow current literature and consider carefully infection control measures in their practices so as to minimize the risk of disease transmission.

Reference

1. Kohn WG, Collins AS, Cleveland JL, et al. CDC Guidelines for infection control in dental health-care settings—2003. *MMWR Recomm Rep* 2003;52:(RR-17):1-61.
2. Rutula WA, Weber DJ, Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee. CDC Guidelines for disinfection and sterilization in healthcare facilities—2008. Available at: "http://www.cdc.gov/hicpac/pdf/guidelines/Disinfection_Nov_2008.pdf". Accessed September 1, 2014.
3. Holmberg SD, Suryaprasad A, Ward JW. CDC. Updated CDC recommendations for the management of hepatitis B virus-infected health-care providers and students-2012. *MMWR Recomm Rep* 2012;61:(RR-3):1-12.

ABBREVIATION

AAPD: American Academy Pediatric Dentistry.