



Parental Knowledge about Oral Health of Children visiting BronxCare Dental clinic

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Purpose

This study assessed the oral health knowledge of the parents of children aged 0 to 14 years visiting BronxCare Pediatric Dental clinic.

Introduction

- Dental caries is the most common chronic childhood disease in children ages 5-17 yrs and is 5 times more common than asthma.
- It disproportionately affects low-income populations due to barriers such as poor health literacy and low socio-economic status.
- Children are dependent on their parents to prevent and address health problems, and they may suffer when their parents' knowledge and skills to fulfill these tasks is insufficient.
- Parental dental habits influence a child's oral health. Thus it is imperative to increase knowledge and foster positive attitude in parents regarding oral health care as it plays a pivotal role in improving and maintaining the overall dental health of children.

Methods

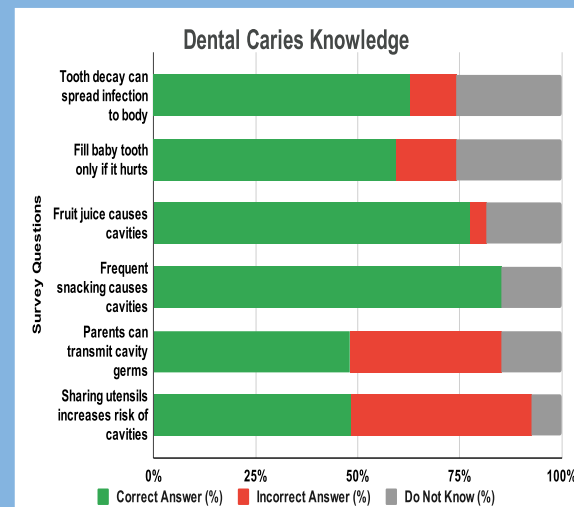
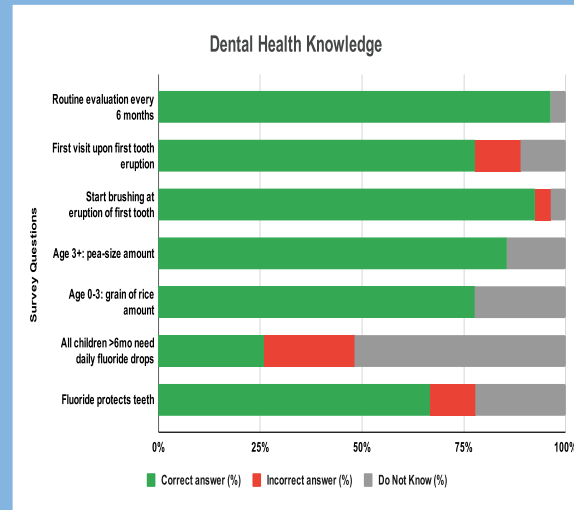
Study Design: A cross-sectional survey of legal guardians of children aged 0 to 14 years was conducted.

Instrument: The survey utilized a validated 13-item questionnaire based on AAPD guidelines as well as previous studies which were focused on assessing parental knowledge and attitude about oral health.

Sample Size: There were 243 responses.

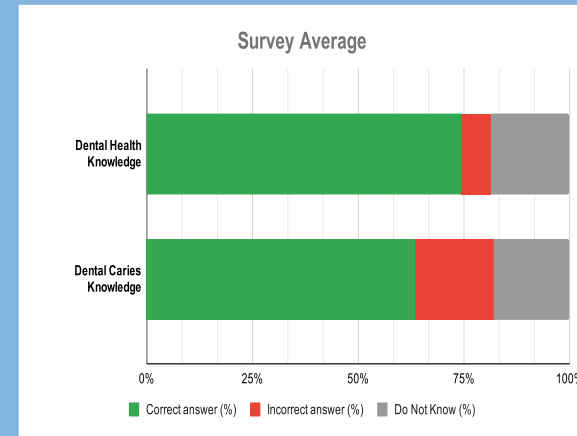
Analysis: Data was analyzed using Chi-square goodness-of-fit tests to validate distribution significance ($P < .05$).

Results



Results

- Consensus was high for routine 6-month visits (96%, $P < .001$).
- Consensus was also high for initiating brushing upon tooth eruption (93%, $P < .001$).
- More than half of the parents were unsure about guidelines for systemic fluoride supplementation while quarter of them correctly agreed that not all children above the age of 6 months require fluoride supplementation.
- While caregivers showed good understanding of oral health practices, their awareness of the impact of dental caries on a child's health and its modes of transmission was comparatively limited.



Discussion

- Knowledge and awareness are necessary to change behaviors related to health and disease prevention.
- Most parents believed that frequent snacking and juice consumption can increase risk of caries.
- The majority of parents understood that oral hygiene practices should commence soon after tooth eruption, and were aware of appropriate toothpaste use for different age groups.
- Additional education is needed to improve understanding of the importance of restoring primary teeth and its implications for a child's overall health.

Conclusion

While general awareness of preventive oral health practices was high, knowledge of disease consequences and transmission pathways remained comparatively limited. Targeted educational interventions are essential to address these gaps and improve clinical outcomes.

References

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