

## Iranian Children Grow Up with Decayed Teeth (Decreased Age of Edentulousness)

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The issue of oral health is considered one of the challenges of the world's health system. So, most countries over the past years to date have implemented plans and programs to reduce the index of dental caries, which of course is said to have achieved relative success. Unfortunately, the fact is that the index of oral health and the teeth of Iranians are far from world indicators.

One of the most important obstacles in the way of promoting the oral health of Iranians is insurance companies that do not fully cover dental services. Tooth extraction, restoration of a class I cavity, taking radiography, or in a few cases, tooth scaling is one of the few services that basic insurance in the country provides to the insured while people's dental problems go beyond this type of service.

Another issue that is considered a challenge in the field of oral health is the lack of a culture of proper use of toothbrushes. Unfortunately, most Iranians brush their teeth once which of course is also done incorrectly at that time. It must be acknowledged that like other developed countries in the world that have been able to succeed in the oral health index, we should also provide free toothbrush and toothpaste services to children.

Studies have shown that the oral health index of Iranian children has deteriorated in recent years. "Evidence suggests that every Iranian over 12 years has 4 damaged teeth, as the president of the oral and maxillofacial association of Iran, said in a TV interview. This is due to a change in the diet of children from tasty foods to soft foods, excessive consumption of sweets and carbohydrates and junk foods" [1] while in some countries this index is between one to two teeth.

Another important issue is that the majority of parents believe the primary teeth will be replaced after a while by permanent teeth, so there is no need for further treatment. Unfortunately, due to poor oral hygiene and lack of attention to this problem in adolescents, most adolescents of the middle classes of society in Iran suffer from permanent teeth decay and gum disease that would lead to teeth loss [1].

It is appropriate to criticize the prevailing culture of families who insist that children's primary teeth are not important and if they are damaged, they should be extracted. Unfortunately, we as dentists have not been able to do our job properly, and have not explained the importance of primary teeth to families. The dentists have neglected and just sought treatment while the issue of prevention is more important.

As a result, it is the job of dentists to explain to parents if extraction of deciduous teeth is done too early, it can cause problems in several ways; apart from disturbing the chewing of food, change in the growth path of the permanent teeth, and reduce the length of the maxillary arch.

The age of edentulousness in Iran has decreased, and the solution of the oral problems of Iranians requires attention to the issue of prevention and health. Therefore, we must have a scientific view of designing projects.

If we look at global achievements, we have to learn not to repeat the same mistakes. This means that the fight against dental caries should be started from childhood and the development of deciduous teeth. In other words, general preventive dental programs such as fluoride therapy, fissure sealant have to be implemented for all children in the whole country.

### **Bibliography**

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