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Delivering Dental Care

Chapter 33

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Learning Objectives

Lesson 33.1: Delivering Dental Care

1. Pronounce, define, and spell the key terms.
2. Discuss knowing your patients, reviewing the patient records, and how to prepare for a patient appointment, including the following:
   - Describe how to prepare the dental treatment area for a patient's arrival.
   - Discuss the importance of preparing a dental treatment room for a procedure.
3. Discuss the concept of team dentistry, and the principles of team positioning, including the following:
   - Describe how the operator is positioned during treatment.
   - Describe how the assistant is positioned during treatment.

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Learning Objectives

Lesson 33.1: Delivering Dental Care (Cont.)

4. Explain the classification of motions.
5. Define each of the operating zones.
6. Explain instrument transfer, including the following:
   - Specify three grasps used by the operator.
   - Specify four items that have to be transferred differently because of design or use.
   - Discuss the differences between one-handed and two-handed instrument transfer techniques.
7. Identify five areas in which the assistant must have competency when practicing expanded functions.
Introduction

- Business assistant, clinical assistant, dental hygienist, and dentist must follow a specific routine
  - Review the patient record
  - Have knowledge of upcoming procedures
  - Have supplies and equipment ready

Know Your Patients

- One of the best ways to know your patients and to be better prepared for the day is to have a brief meeting or review of the day before your patients arrive
- Discuss:
  - Change in schedule or procedure
  - Change in the patient’s health that could alter dental treatment
  - Additional supplies or equipment that may be needed
  - Preparation for the apprehensive patient
  - Assignment of expanded functions

Reviewing the Patient Record

- Several sections of a patient record are reviewed at each patient visit
- Administrative staff
  - Check for changes in personal information, such as address or phone number change
- Clinical staff
  - Check for health problems that may alter dental treatment
  - Look for medical alerts
  - Review progress notes for the planned treatment for the day
Preparing the Treatment Area

- Treatment room clean, disinfected, and ready for the next patient
- Patient records, radiographs, and laboratory results in place
- Sterile preset tray and other supplies in place
- Dental chair positioned to seat the patient
- Additional equipment moved out of the way for the patient and dental team

Greeting and Seating the Patient

- Pleasantly greet the patient by name in the reception area
- Escort the patient to the treatment area
- Place the patient’s personal items in a safe place, out of the way of the procedure
- Initiate conversation with the patient
- Ask whether the patient has any questions about the treatment for the day that you might be able to answer

Team Dentistry

- Components of work simplification
  - Decreased number of instruments; ergonomically correct equipment
  - Sequencing of instruments on the tray by their use
  - Correct positioning of the patient, dentist, and assistant to minimize fatigue
  - Use of appropriate moisture-control techniques
  - Transfer of instruments and dental materials as necessary
  - Use of the least possible amount of motion
  - Performance of expanded functions by the assistant
Principles of Team Positioning

- The dentist and dental assistant should develop positioning habits that allow access to and visualization of all areas of the oral cavity.
  - Whenever the dentist and the assistant must stretch to reach for an instrument or gain access to an area of the mouth, stress is placed on the body.
  - Accumulated strain contributes to lower back pain, circulatory problems, and muscle aches and pains.

Concept of Four-Handed Dentistry

Positioning the Patient

- Once the patient has been escorted to the treatment area and seated, he or she is:
  - Lowered to the supine position
  - Asked to slide up in the chair until the top of the head is even with the top of the headrest
  - Asked to turn his or her head to the right or the left to allow easier access to a specific area of the mouth

- The operator makes final adjustments to the chair to establish proper working distance.
  - The correct distance should be approximately 12 to 14 inches.
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Positioning the Operator

- Seated as far back as possible
- Thighs parallel to the floor or knees slightly lower than the hips
- Feet flat on the floor
- Backrest of the chair positioned to support the lower portion or small of the back
- Operator’s forearms bent at the elbow and parallel to the floor

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Correctly Seated Operator

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Positioning the Dental Assistant

- Seated well back on the stool
- Feet on the base or foot ring of the stool
- Positioned as close as possible to the dental chair
- Legs parallel to the patient’s chair
- Eye level 4 to 6 inches above the eye level of the operator
Correctly Seated Dental Assistant

Motion Economy
- Classification of motions: 5 categories according to extent of movement
  - Class I: Movement of fingers only
  - Class II: Movement of fingers and wrist
  - Class III: Movement of fingers, wrist, and elbow
  - Class IV: Use of the entire arm and shoulder
  - Class V: Use of the entire upper torso

Operating Zones
- Basic concept required for the efficient, comfortable practice of team dentistry
  - Operator’s zone
  - Transfer zone
  - Assistant’s zone
  - Static zone
Operating Zones for a Right-Handed Operator

Operating Zones for a Left-Handed Operator

Instrument Transfer
- An ergonomically sound way to practice dentistry using the skills of the dental assistant while including work simplification techniques
- Dentist relies on the clinical assistant to have the supplies, instruments, and dental materials ready for transfer into the dentist’s hands
- Requires coordination, communication, and practice between the dentist and the dental assistant
Objectives of Efficient Instrument Transfer

- Understand sequence of procedures and anticipate when instrument transfer is required
- Transfer dental instruments and dental materials with the left hand
- Transfer of instruments should be accomplished with a minimum of motion, involving only the fingers, wrist, and elbow
- Instruments are transferred in their position of use
- Instrument is transferred so that dentist can grasp the instrument for its appropriate use
- An instrument being transferred must be positioned firmly in the dentist’s hand

Grasping an Instrument

- Three basic grasps
  - Pen grasp: The instrument is held in the same manner as a pen
  - Palm grasp: The instrument is held securely in the palm of the hand
  - Palm-thumb grasp: The instrument is held in the palm of the hand and the thumb is used to stabilize and guide the instrument

Basic Instrument Grasps
Transfer Technique
- Dental assistant uses a specific, single-handed technique for efficiency
- Applies to hand instruments, dental handpieces, and air-water syringes

Variations in Instrument Transfer
- Mirror and explorer
- Cotton pliers
- Handpiece
- Instruments with hinges

The Expanded-Functions Dental Assistant
- Expanded function refers to specific intraoral procedures, or part of a procedure, performed by the clinical dental assistant that have been delegated by the dentist
- Advantages
  - Increased productivity
  - Less stress on the dentist
  - More patients seen
  - Increased job satisfaction
Dental Supervision

- Direct supervision
  - The dentist must be in the same treatment area as the EFDA for the assistant to perform the function
- Indirect supervision
  - The dentist must be in the dental office area but not necessarily be present in the same treatment room as the EFDA

Working as the Operator

- Operator positioning
- Developing mirror skills
  - Establishing a working position
  - Establishing preferred mirror-to-tooth position
- Using a fulcrum
- Understanding dental anatomy
- Understanding cavity preparations
- Adapting instrumentation
- Applying dental materials
- Evaluation of expanded functions

Operator Positioning and Developing Mirror Skills

- Operator positioning
  - Follow all guidelines and avoid curving the spine and slumping
- Mirror skills
  - Maintain posture, reduce eyestrain, and complete specific functions
  - Position yourself to gain a “straight-on” visual effect
  - Mirror must be kept parallel to the working surface
Using a Fulcrum

- Fulcrum: A “finger rest” that stabilizes the hand

Understanding Dental Anatomy and Cavity Preparations

- Knowledge of dental anatomy must be attained if you are to gain an understanding of a dental procedure and a delegated function
- To know where to place a dental material and how to apply a matrix band and wedge, it is important for the assistant to understand specific cavity terms and classifications

Adapting Instrumentation

- You must be able to adapt the working end of the instrument to the tooth surface and then to go one step further by correctly moving the instrument
  - By moving the hand, wrist, and forearm as a single unit for enhanced strength
  - By moving the fingers back and forth in a more confined or precise area
Applying Dental Materials

- When you take on the function of placing a dental material into the mouth or cavity preparation, you also need to know the application process.
- Each dental material is unique in how it is used and where it is placed in the mouth.

Evaluation of Expanded Functions

- You are accountable for your skills.
- You must attain the knowledge and skill needed for an expanded function through mastery of course material and also by talking with the dentist with whom you practice.

Questions?