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Novel Covid-19 & it's affect on Dental Healthcare

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Novel Covid-19 has taken the world by storm with 41,104,946 confirmed cases of Covid-19, including 1,128,325 deaths as of October 22, 2020 after it was firstly reported in Wuhan, China. According to biological and clinical research, the mode of transmission of this zoonotic virus has confirmed to be through respiratory droplets which leaves the dental healthcare professionals under the high risk category of contacting the virus as dentistry involves the use of rotary dental and surgical instruments i.e. hand pieces or ultrasonic scalers which create a visible spray that can contain particle droplets of saliva, water, blood & microorganisms. Once present in the human body, SARS-CoV-2 is present abundantly in nasopharyngeal and salivary secretions of affected patients who can be either symptomatic or asymptomatic. Additionally, with basic surgical masks not being 100 percent effective against the aerosols dental practitioners were left ill-fitted to combat the virus during the initial surge when treating dental emergencies such as dentoalveolar trauma and progressive fascial space infection. This article, based of literature review & experience, describes how Covid-19 has brought changes in dental healthcare for both dental learning students and professionals in terms of continuing education/learning hands-on, in patient screening as the oral symptoms of Covid-19 such as xerostomia and loss of taste distinct to normal flu-like symptoms can help with diagnosis, how practice of strict infection control strategies with correct donning and doffing of PPE is now more important than before and a different approach to patient management protocol.

Biography

Bashair Ahmed is a 22 year old final year dental student currently enrolled in Jinnah Medical and Dental College, Karachi, Pakistan. With the ongoing pandemic which took a huge toll on everybody's lifestyle, she used her research skills and personal hands on experience in treating dental patients to review how COVID-19, which is here to stay, has affected dental setting around the world.

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