

AWARENESS ABOUT DENTAL FLOSSING IN CHENNAI POPULATION

Type of Manuscript: Research article

Running Title: awareness about dental flossing in chennai

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ABSTRACT

AIM: The aim to determine the awareness about dental flossing in Chennai population.

BACKGROUND: Brushing cleans the surface of your teeth but dental floss is needed in order to clean out the gaps between the teeth, where bacteria often reside. If flossing is not done, there are more chances to have plaque build-up, which can lead to cavities, tooth decay, gum disease and periodontal diseases. The built-up of plaque in interproximal areas is the primary cause of dental diseases, such as gingivitis, periodontal diseases and dental caries, the use of floss is commonly recommended in order to prevent these conditions from developing. Since oral health problem are great concern particularly among uneducated people, this study is done to create awareness about flossing among Tamilnadu population.

REASON: This study was conducted in order create awareness about dental flossing among the people and to help them maintaining a better oral hygiene.

KEYWORDS: Interproximal, Gingivitis, Periodontal diseases.

INTRODUCTION

One of the major oral health problems all over the world are periodontal diseases, and the major reason for tooth loss for people globally is periodontitis. On the basis of recent reports of the World Health Organization the severe periodontitis exists in 5-20% of adult populations, and the signs of gingivitis are shown by most children. [1] To reduce the burden of periodontal disease in adult populations worldwide, to concentrate on the important risk factors of periodontal and chronic diseases, and to establish essential preventive strategies for periodontal disease, the World Health Organization (WHO) is developing a national capacity for the prevention of disease. [2] It has been seen that periodontal diseases are the most prevalent in developing countries like India. [3] Dental plaque is the main etiological factor in the causation of periodontal disease and effective removal of bacterial plaque is very essential for its prevention [4]. The mechanical method of plaque control is the easiest way to prevent periodontal diseases. [5] But the use of tooth brushing alone is not enough for complete removal of plaque, the combination of both tooth brushing and dental

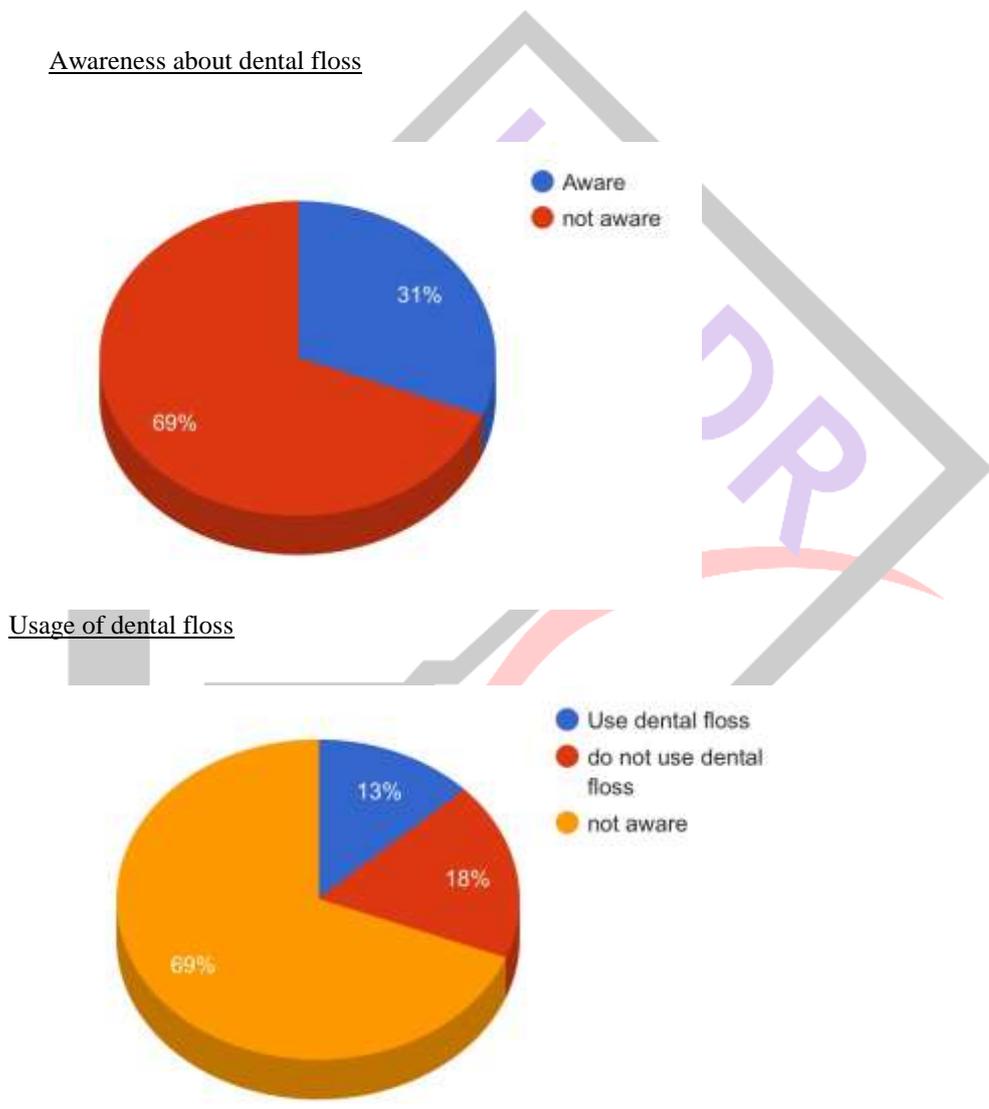
floss is proven to be more effective in removing plaque. [6, 7] Daily flossing significantly reduced the amount of plaque found between the teeth when compared to a manual brushing alone. [8]

Also the daily use of dental floss lowers the risk of cardiovascular disease, [9] and formation of a dental flossing habit, includes the placement of the behaviour within the routine, past behaviour, prospective memory ability, and motivational factors, [10] besides preventing periodontal diseases. Unfortunately the usage of dental floss as an adjunct oral hygiene aid is not encouraging throughout the world. Various reports suggest that dental floss is used only by a small part of the population on a daily basis. [11, 12, 13, 14]. This study was conducted to assess the awareness and knowledge about dental flossing among Chennai population.

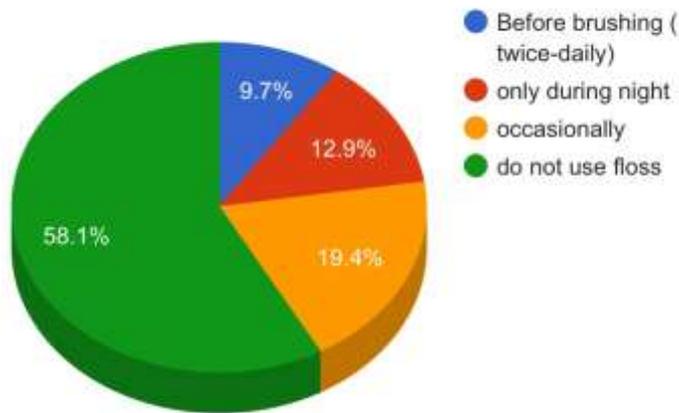
MATERIALS AND METHODS

A questionnaire based study consisting of 16 questions and was distributed among local population. The sample size was 100. The research was done in Chennai population. In this survey there were no right or wrong answers and no time limit was given to them. The people were asked to answer only the questions which they know or only the questions which they can understand and the remaining questions were asked to skip. After the completion of questions by the people the responses were interpreted in accordance with the norms.

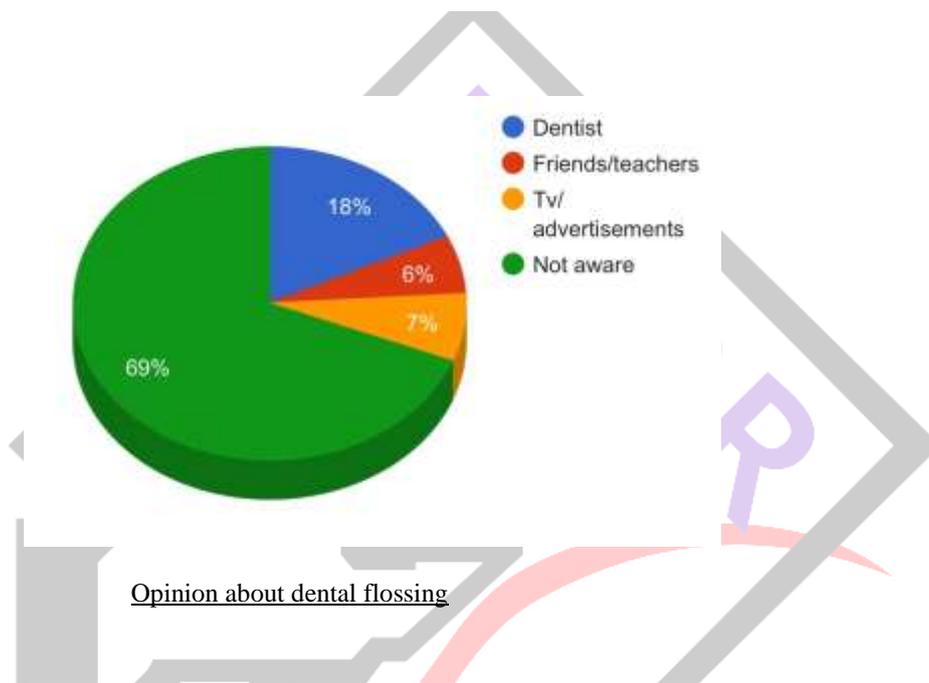
RESULT



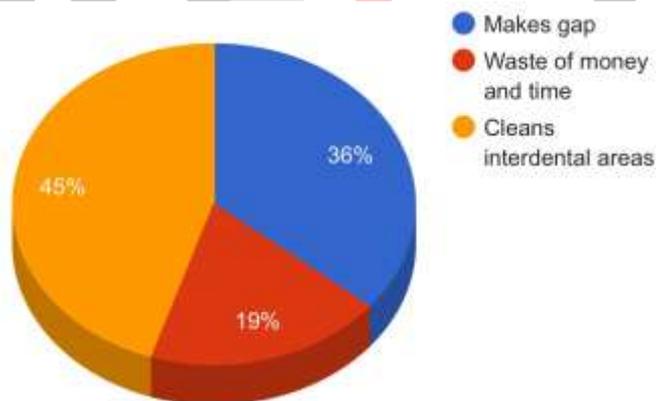
Frequency of usage of dental floss

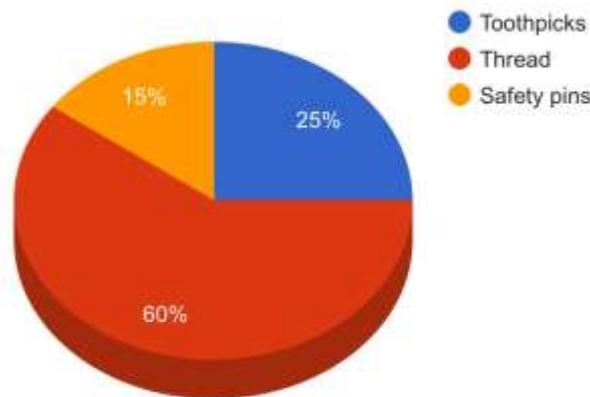


Means of awareness



Opinion about dental flossing



Usage of other material to clean the interdental spaces**DISCUSSION**

This experiment was conducted to know the percentage of awareness about dental floss among Chennai population. In this the number of people who are aware of dental flossing, the number of people who use dental floss, their means of awareness, frequency, their opinion about dental floss, and other materials they use to clean the interdental space were also included. As a result of this survey we come to know that only 30% (approx.) have awareness about dental flossing, out of them only 10% (approx.) knows to use dental floss the remaining does not. In case of frequency the dental floss is used occasionally or during night but then they are not aware that best results are seen only when flossing is done before brushing. The next thing that we have to give importance is that people have some wrong opinions about dental flossing that it will make gap between the teeth and they think that as waste of money and time. So we have to put efforts to change their bad opinions about dental floss. And it is seen that people has knowledge about floss mainly through dentists and advertisements. People also use other materials like pins, thread and tooth pics to clean the interdental space. We have to create awareness about dental floss so that they will stop using other materials which are not prescribed by the dentist.

CONCLUSION

To summarize, most dentists recognize dental floss as an essential oral hygiene aid and agree that its routine use is necessary for preventing periodontal diseases. Lack of adequate knowledge among the people regarding dental floss has to be addressed immediately. The percentage of prescription of dental floss by dentists is also less, which can be correlated with lack of patient compliance. [15] Also there are very less advertisements for dental floss. A large proportion of dentists agree that dental floss requires good propaganda to increase its usage among people. Awareness regarding dental floss needs to be spread in Chennai population as a preventive oral healthcare behaviour. Therefore, we have to create awareness about dental flossing among people through dentist prescription and advertisements which are two main sources to communicate people. And this will increase usage of dental floss along with toothbrush that may prevent periodontal diseases.

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