APPENDICES

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Get Rid of Wastes Safely

Every time you examine a person’s mouth, fill a cavity, or extract a tooth, you are left with some waste. For example, used cotton or gauze, disposable needles and syringes, plastic gloves, and other materials must be thrown away. But **do not put them in the trash.** These wastes carry germs and can spread infections to you and to people in the family and community. Wear gloves when you touch wastes, and get rid of them carefully.

**HOW TO DISPOSE OF SHARP WASTES**

Sharp wastes must be put into a container so they will not injure anyone who finds them. A container made of metal or heavy plastic, with a lid or tape to close it, works well.

When the container is half full, add 5% bleach solution, then seal it closed and bury it deep in the ground.

---

**Make a box to dispose of needles safely**

Find a metal or hard plastic box. Make a long hole in the lid of the box that is wide on one side and gets narrower on the other side.

(continued on next page)
When you have finished using a disposable syringe, put the needle into the box and slide it down to the narrowest point.

Then pull up on the syringe and the needle will fall off into the box. The plastic syringe can be sterilized and thrown into a waste pit (see below).

When the box is half full, pour 5% bleach solution into the box, seal it closed, and then bury it deep in the ground.

OTHER WASTES
Other wastes, like plastic gloves, syringe barrels, or cloth soaked in blood, should be sterilized and then buried deep in the ground. You can sterilize them by soaking them in bleach for 20 minutes.

**WARNING:** Do not burn plastic gloves, syringes, or any other plastics. Burning plastic wastes is dangerous—when plastic burns, it makes smoke and ash that is very poisonous.

BURRING WASTES
Find a place away from where people get their drinking water and away from where children play. Dig a safe waste pit to bury wastes.
The Dental Kit

In the next 10 pages, there are lists of medicines, instruments, and other supplies recommended in this book. Keep them together in a kit. You may want to change some of them, or add others to meet your own needs.

As a dental worker, you will be able to get many of the items on the lists from your government medical stores. Some things you will have to buy yourself. That can be expensive, so we make several suggestions to help you save money.

Before you order, decide how many of each thing you need. Ask yourself: How many persons do I treat each day? For what problems? Then order enough medicines and supplies for three months.

**Note:** As more people learn about the treatment you can give, more will come to ask for your help. Remember this when you order. Remember, also, that some persons may need more than one treatment.

On pages 208 to 209 we give an example. We recommend how many medicines, supplies, and instruments you will need if you see 10 people a day—200 a month. You cannot be exact, of course, because you cannot predict exactly what problems will arise. However, we can say that, on the average:

In a group of 10 persons with urgent problems:
- 6 persons need you to take out 1 or more teeth (so you must inject)
- 2 persons need cement fillings
- 2 persons need medicine before you can treat them.

Many of these persons must return for another visit:
- 5 persons need you to scale their teeth and teach them how to care for them better
- 1 person will need a cement filling
- 2 persons will need treatment after taking medicine.
Another antibiotic, tetracycline, is not recommended for any of the treatments in this book because it is a broad-spectrum antibiotic. Narrow spectrum antibiotics (see ‘antibiotics,’ page 225) are usually safer and just as effective for most dental problems. If you do use tetracycline, read page 355 of Where There Is No Doctor and remember, do not give tetracycline to a pregnant woman or to a young child. Tetracycline can make young, developing teeth turn yellow.

**SUGGESTIONS:**

1. Compare prices before you buy medicines. Often the same medicine has many different names. The *generic name* (the name we use on this page) usually is cheapest, and the medicine is just as good as the ‘brand-name medicines’. Use the generic name to order and buy, not the brand name.

2. Always look for a date on the package. It is called the expiration date (or expiry date). If today is later than that date, do not buy or use that medicine.

3. Be careful to give the correct dose. Read the next two pages carefully, as well as the ‘Treatment’ section of each problem in Chapter 7. If pages 209 and 210 are not clear to you, read Chapter 8 (pages 59 to 64) of Where There Is No Doctor.

4. For serious infections, see page 210.
THE CORRECT DOSE

Before you give medicine, think about the sick person’s weight and age. The smaller children are, the less medicine they need. For example, pain medicine such as aspirin (300 mg tablets) or acetaminophen (500 mg tablets) can be broken up into smaller tablets:

Four times a day:

- Adults take 2 tablets
- Children 8–12 take 1 tablet
- Children 3–7 take ½ tablet
- Babies take acetaminophen only, ¼ tablet

Note: Do not hold aspirin on the bad tooth. Aspirin has acid that can hurt the tooth. Always swallow aspirin immediately. For severe pain, when aspirin does not help, an adult can take 30 mg of codeine 4 to 6 times a day, as needed.

ANTIBIOTICS: TO FIGHT INFECTION

Antibiotics kill bacteria that cause infections. Some antibiotics work better than others on certain bacteria. If you can, test the pus (page 220) to find which antibiotic works best.

Do not give penicillin to a person who is allergic to it. Ask about the person’s allergies before you give penicillin pills or injections. When you inject penicillin, always keep epinephrine (Adrenalin) ready to inject if the person shows signs of allergic shock. Stay with the person for 30 minutes. If you see these signs…

- cool, moist, pale, gray skin (cold sweat)
- weak, rapid pulse (heartbeat)
- difficulty breathing
- loss of consciousness

… immediately inject epinephrine: .5 ml for adults or .25 ml for children. If necessary, inject the same dose again after 20 or 30 minutes. For more information on allergic shock, see Where There Is No Doctor, pages 70 to 71.

Always give the full dose of penicillin or any antibiotic, even if the person feels better. See page 94 for the correct dose of penicillin or erythromycin. Erythromycin also comes in liquid form. It has 125 mg in 5 ml, so 10 ml of liquid (about 2 large teaspoons) is the same as one 250 mg tablet.

It is important to take a strong first dose of penicillin or erythromycin, and then smaller doses 4 times a day for 3 to 5 days after that. Carefully read the instructions on page 94.
INJECTIONS: FOR SEVERE INFECTIONS

It is always safer to take medicine by mouth. Sometimes, however, an infection is so bad that you need to give medicine by injection. Learn how to give injections from an experienced health worker. The injections described on this page are not like the anesthetic injections in Chapter 9 of this book—you must inject these medicines into a large muscle in the buttocks or arm. For more instructions on this kind of injection, see Chapter 9 (pages 65-74) of Where There Is No Doctor.

For severe infection: There are 2 kinds of penicillin to inject.

1. procaine penicillin, bottle with 300,000 Units per ml
2. crystalline penicillin, bottle with 1,000,000 Units per ml

You will usually use ‘aqueous procaine penicillin’. Give only 1 injection per day.

For very severe infections, give ‘crystalline penicillin’ every 6 hours for the first day. It acts quickly and for a short time only.

### INJECTABLE MEDICINES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proper Name</th>
<th>Amount you need in 3 months</th>
<th>Amount to keep in kit</th>
<th>DOSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. procaine penicillin, bottle with 300,000 Units per ml</td>
<td>200 bottles</td>
<td>4 bottles</td>
<td>Adult (over 40 kg)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. crystalline penicillin, bottle with 1,000,000 Units per ml</td>
<td>50 bottles</td>
<td>1 bottle</td>
<td>Child 6–12 years old (22–39 kg)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Child 1–6 years old (10–22 kg)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Adult: 4 ml 2 times/day
- Child 6–12 years old: 2 ml 2 times/day
- Child 1–6 years old: 1 ml 2 times/day
**SUPPLIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Proper Name</th>
<th>Local name (write in here)</th>
<th>Amount you need in 3 months</th>
<th>Amount to keep in kit</th>
<th>See Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To make dressings</td>
<td>1. clean cotton gauze</td>
<td></td>
<td>8 packages of 100</td>
<td>20 pieces</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. clean cotton rolls</td>
<td></td>
<td>10 packages of 50</td>
<td>8 rolls</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To fill cavities</td>
<td>3. oil of cloves (eugenol)</td>
<td></td>
<td>50 ml</td>
<td>1 small bottle</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. zinc oxide powder</td>
<td></td>
<td>500 grams</td>
<td>1 small bottle</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To treat sensitive teeth</td>
<td>5. fluoride toothpaste</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 tube</td>
<td>1 tube</td>
<td>211 (below)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To give injections of local anesthetic</td>
<td>6. lidocaine 2% 1.8 ml cartridge</td>
<td></td>
<td>8 boxes of 100 cartridges</td>
<td>10 cartridges</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. disposable needles, 27 gauge long</td>
<td></td>
<td>8 boxes of 100 needles</td>
<td>10 needles</td>
<td>136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8. lidocaine topical anesthetic</td>
<td></td>
<td>5 small tubes</td>
<td>1 tube</td>
<td>141</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FLUORIDE**

You can use a special solution of fluoride (if available) or any fluoride toothpaste, which is much cheaper and more common (see above, number 5), in 2 ways:

**To treat a sensitive tooth:** Put cotton rolls between the lip and gum on each side of the bad tooth. Dry the bad tooth with cotton and look for the small groove that is causing the pain. Cover the groove with a smear of fluoride toothpaste and tell the patient not to spit or rinse it out for several minutes. One week later, give the same treatment again, or have the patient do it himself.

**To help prevent cavities,** in children who do not clean their teeth with fluoride toothpaste, once a week have children bring their toothbrushes or toothsticks to school. Put some fluoride toothpaste on each child’s brush or stick and have them brush and coat their teeth, leaving the paste in their mouths for at least one minute. Then they can spit it out. Do not eat or drink for 30 minutes.

On page 24, children are shown using a twice yearly application of a special paste, a ‘topical fluoride gel’. This is good, but the weekly treatment with fluoride paste is even better for the teeth.
SUGGESTIONS:

If you order your supplies in bulk long before you need them, you probably will pay lower prices. If you have a place to store supplies that is clean, dry, and free from cockroaches and rats, consider ordering enough for one year instead of only 3 months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Proper Name</th>
<th>local name (write in here)</th>
<th>Amount you need in 3 months</th>
<th>Amount to keep in kit</th>
<th>See Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To make rinses</td>
<td>1. salt</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 kilograms</td>
<td>100 grams</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. hydrogen peroxide</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 liters</td>
<td>500 ml</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To keep instruments clean</td>
<td>1. 95% alcohol disinfectant solution</td>
<td></td>
<td>18 liters</td>
<td>1.5 liters</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. bleach for disinfectant solution</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.5 liters</td>
<td>125 ml (½ cup)</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To keep instruments sharp</td>
<td>Arkansas sharpening stone</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 stone</td>
<td>1 stone</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For examining</td>
<td>wooden tongue depressors</td>
<td></td>
<td>8 boxes of 50 per box</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INSTRUMENTS

When you are treating several people on the same day, you will need to clean some instruments (see pages 86 to 89) at the same time that you are using others. Therefore, it is necessary to have several of each kind of instrument, to be sure that the instrument you need will be ready (clean or sterile) when you need it.

There are 3 instruments you will need for each person who comes to you, no matter which treatment is needed. They are: a mirror, probe, and cotton pliers. Keep them together. Below we recommend that you have 15 of each of these, so you can keep one in each treatment kit. You do not need to buy all of these instruments. You can make several of them—see pages 214–216. If you like, buy only one example of each of the instruments below, and use them as models to copy when you make your own extra instruments.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Proper Name</th>
<th>Local name (write in here)</th>
<th>Number to buy or make</th>
<th>See Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To examine or to give any treatment</td>
<td>1. dental mouth mirror</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. explorer</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. cotton pliers</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To inject</td>
<td>Aspirating dental syringe to use with 1.8 ml cartridges</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To scale teeth</td>
<td>1. Ivory C-1 scaler</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Gracey 11–12 curette</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To place cement fillings</td>
<td>1. spoon excavator</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. filling instrument</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. cement spatula</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To remove teeth</td>
<td>1. spoon excavator</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. straight elevator (No. 34)</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. upper universal forcep (No. 150)</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. lower universal forcep (No. 156)</td>
<td>__________________________</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: See pages 161–162 for recommendations of other elevators and forceps that are good to have if you can afford them.

*If you want the help of a charitable organization in buying instruments, see page 217.
MAKING YOUR OWN DENTAL INSTRUMENTS*

Here are a few ideas for making instruments at low cost. Try to use materials that are available where you live.

Can you think of any other materials you can use?

Each instrument has two parts: a **handle** and a **working piece** at the end. Join them together:

... with wire:

... with glue or even wax:

If you make the end flat, it can prevent the working piece from turning. Pound the working piece with a hammer and make a flat slot in the handle so the working piece cannot turn.

*I am grateful to Aaron Yaschine for the ideas in this section.*
MAKING THE THREE INSTRUMENTS YOU USE MOST

**Mirror:** Use old pieces of mirror or a shiny piece of tin. You even can use a polished silver coin. A tongue depressor is the handle.

**Probe:** Use the end of a paper clip, pin or needle for the working piece. Rub it against a smooth stone to sharpen it. Bend it so it can reach around to the back of a tooth. Attach the working piece to a smooth stick handle (p. 214).

**Tweezers:** Draw the shape on a piece of tin and then cut it out with strong scissors. Use a file or a smooth stone to make the edges smooth. Bend in half to make the tweezers.
MAKING OTHER INSTRUMENTS AND SUPPLIES

**Spoon:** Bend a paper clip or needle. Flatten the end. Then pound a small stone against the end, to make it hollow. Make 2 bends and attach to a stick handle.

**Filling Tool:** Remove the heads from 2 long screws. With a file and hammer, make the end of one screw flat and the end of the other screw round. Bend each end in the direction of the edge (not the face) of the flat side. Attach both working pieces to a small stick handle.

**Dental Floss:** When using string to clean between your teeth (pages 71–72), you may have trouble getting this string down in between your teeth. Sometimes, also, the string gets caught there, forming a kind of ‘bird’s nest’. Three things can cause problems with dental floss:

1. **An incorrectly made filling**—flat and rough instead of round and smooth. Replace the filling.

2. **Teeth too tight together.** Use the floss on a tooth. Then pull the string out from between the teeth as you press the free end down against the gum with the fingers of your other hand. If there is a sharp filling on a tooth, the string will pass under the filling as it comes free.

3. **String that is too thick.** Make thinner but stronger floss by waxing as in this picture. The wax also will make the floss easier to slide between your teeth.

(1) Soak thin string in hot wax.
(2) To remove the extra wax, pull the string between your fingers.
BUYING DENTAL SUPPLIES

When you do not have much money, you must spend wisely. Dental instruments are very expensive, especially when you buy them at commercial prices. Ask other health workers in your area where you can get instruments at lower prices. You can also try contacting the national dental association in your country. If you do not know how to locate your national dental association, contact the World Dental Federation:

FDI – World Dental Federation
Tour de Cointrin, Avenue Louis Casaï 51
Case Postale 3
1216 Geneve-Cointrin
SWITZERLAND
tel: 41-22-560-81-50
fax: 41-22-560-81-40
website: www.fdiworldental.org

There are many organizations that donate health supplies—including dental instruments—or that distribute them at low cost. Some of these organizations prefer to help church-sponsored health projects, but others will provide instruments to anyone who needs them.

Durbin PLC, a company in England, may sell the instruments mentioned in this book at lower than commercial prices. For more information, contact:

Durbin PLC
180 Northolt Road
South Harrow, Middlesex HA2 0LT
UK
tel: 44-20-8660-2220
fax: 44-20-8668-0751
website: www.durbin.co.uk
e-mail: cataloguesales@durbin.co.uk

Other organizations that may be able to help:

World Dental Relief
PO Box 747
Broken Arrow, OK 74013-0747
USA
tel: 1-918-251-2612
fax: 1-918-251-6326
website: www.worlddentalrelief.com
e-mail: dentalreliefinc@aol.com

Project HOPE
255 Carter Hall Lane
P.O. Box 250
Millwood, VA 22646
USA
tel: 1-540-837-2100
website: www.projecthope.org
e-mail: HOPE@projecthope.org

Direct Relief International
27 S. La Patera Lane
Goleta, CA 93117
USA
tel: 1-805-964-4767
fax: 1-805-681-4838
website: www.directrelief.org
e-mail: info@directrelief.org

MAP International
4700 Glynco Parkway
Brunswick, GA 31525-6800
USA
tel: 1-800-225-8550
website: www.map.org
e-mail: map@map.org

Dentaid
Giles Lane, Landford,
Salisbury, Wiltshire SP5 2BG
UK
tel: 44-1794-324249
fax: 44-1794-323871
website: www.dentaid.org
e-mail: info@dentaid.org
For record keeping, you can divide the mouth into 4 parts:

- Upper Right (UR)
- Upper Left (UL)
- Lower Left (LL)
- Lower Right (LR)

In each part there are 8 teeth (fewer in children—see page 43).

You can call each tooth by its short name, for example, UR3.

Keep a record of each person you see. Write some brief information about the person and the problem. This way, if the person returns, you remember what you did to help.

When a person needs to come more than once to take care of a problem, it is better to keep a special record for that person. With all the treatments on one page, you can follow that person’s progress more easily. Below is an example for a person named Yupere. Yupere has a bad tooth that has hurt from time to time for 2 months. One day when he woke up, his face was swollen. Yupere decided to wait a day to see if the swelling would go away. The next day it was worse, so he went to the medical post for treatment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Diagnosis</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Instructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 June 93</td>
<td>Edasi</td>
<td>Abscess</td>
<td>UL4 with 4 tabs</td>
<td>1 week inside mouth and on face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Swollen face</td>
<td>1 tab 4 x day for 3 days</td>
<td>Drink lots of liquids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 June 93</td>
<td>E-Toni</td>
<td>Abscess</td>
<td>Son tried</td>
<td>3 days at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 June 93</td>
<td>Yupere</td>
<td>Abscess UL4</td>
<td>1 tab 4 x day for 2 days</td>
<td>3 days at home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NAME: Yupere Epp

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Diagnosis</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Instructions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 June 93</td>
<td>Abscess</td>
<td>UL4 with 4 tabs</td>
<td>1 week inside mouth and on face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 June 93</td>
<td>Swollen face</td>
<td>1 tab 4 x day for 3 days</td>
<td>Drink lots of liquids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 June 93</td>
<td>Son tried</td>
<td>Son tried</td>
<td>Son tried</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 June 93</td>
<td>3 days at home</td>
<td>3 days at home</td>
<td>3 days at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 June 93</td>
<td>Abscess UL4</td>
<td>Abscess UL4</td>
<td>1 tab 4 x day for 2 days</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reports

You need to write a report whenever you send a person for medical help. Give as much information as possible so that your treatment can continue and new treatment starts as quickly as possible. If you cannot go along, always send a report with a sick person.

The story of Niame: After drinking for several hours, Niame’s husband returned home asking for money. She had none and told him so. He did not believe Niame, so he beat her with his hands and then a knife. Naime’s friends carried her, unconscious and bleeding, to the aid post. The front part of her lower jaw was hanging out of position.
Surveys

It is a good idea to know how many persons in your community have cavities and gum disease. Look in the mouths of children and adults and make a record of what you see. Here is an example that is used in Mozambique:

Put a line through the circle for each person with:

- cavities Ø
- red, swollen gums Ø

The dental workers in Mozambique do a quick survey in 2 schools, 2 mother-and-child health clinics, and 2 cooperatives or factories in their community.

In each place, they examine 50 persons. This is enough to give an idea of the general health of teeth and gums in the community.

They make a paper for each age group. Each paper has 3 sections. They make a mark for each person they see, until all 50 circles have marks in them. They make extra marks if they see a tooth and/or gum problem.

In this example, you can see that children have more problems with cavities, while adults suffer more from gum disease. This is often true.

This survey helps the dental worker in three ways:

1. it shows how serious tooth decay and gum disease are in the community.
2. it shows which age group is suffering the most. To these people the dental worker must plan to give the most attention.
3. it gives the dental worker something to show the people when they are discussing why to change some old habits and adapt some new ideas.
Resources

TEACHING MATERIALS

**Oral Health Manual**
This manual is designed for clinical workers who want to learn about oral health care in areas with limited resources and no dentist. Written in ‘plain English’ with clear layout and high quality images, it includes clear advice on how to set up and manage an oral health clinic, examine the mouth and diagnose common problems, perform injections in the mouth, and perform cleaning and simple extractions. Available in English, French and Spanish.

Free download from the web here: www.teethrelief.org.uk/teaching-material/

Order in print or CD-ROM from:
**Sunnymede Trust – Teeth Relief**
1 Laneway, Putney
London SW15 5HX, UK
email: info@teethrelief.org.uk
website: www.teethrelief.org.uk/teaching-material/

Or from:
**TALC**
Units 25/26
Thrales End Business Centre
Thrales End Lane, Harpenden
Hertfordshire AL5 3NS, UK
tel: 44-1582-380883
e-mail: info@talcuk.org
website: www.talcuk.org

**Guide for Safety and Infection Control for Oral Healthcare Missions**
This is a practical guide to providing safe dental care in low-resource settings. Available from:

**OSAP — Organization for Safety & Asepsis Procedures**
A Global Dental Safety Organization
P.O. Box 6297
Annapolis, MD 21401, USA
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WHO has a Focal Point for Oral Health in each of its regional offices around the world. This web page gives contact information for each regional office, as well as other resources:
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RCORTI works in collaboration with the WHO to conduct research, training and demonstration activities relating to oral and facial health problems, with emphasis on Noma (cancrum oris), oral cancers, oral manifestations of HIV/AIDS, dental caries, periodontal diseases, dental fluorosis and cranio-facial anomalies. The Centre organizes regular training programmes and workshops throughout Africa for all dental practitioners.

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VOCABULARY

This vocabulary is listed in the order of the alphabet: A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Most names of sicknesses are not in this vocabulary. Find the name of a sickness in the Index and read about it in the book.

There are many words in this vocabulary that are not in the rest of the book, but you may see them in other books or hear dentists use them.

A

Abscess  A sac of pus caused by an infection. For example, a boil.

Acid  A strong liquid that is produced from certain foods left in the mouth. Acid causes both tooth decay and gum disease.

Acute  Sudden and short-lived. An acute illness is one that starts suddenly and lasts a short time. The opposite of ‘chronic’.

Adrenaline  Also called epinephrine. A drug which stimulates the heart, used for severe allergic shock.

Adult teeth  See Permanent teeth.

Allergy  A bad reaction after breathing in, eating, touching, or being injected with something. The reaction may be itching, sneezing, or difficult breathing.

Analgesic  Medicine to calm pain. Aspirin, acetaminophen (paracetamol), and codeine are all analgesics.

Amalgam  A special metal used in permanent fillings.

Anemia  A disease in which the blood gets thin. Signs include tiredness, pale skin, and lack of energy.

Anesthetic  A drug that causes the mouth or other part of the body to feel numb.

Antibiotic  Medicine that fights infections caused by bacteria. A broad-spectrum antibiotic such as tetracycline kills many kinds of bacteria, while a narrow-spectrum antibiotic like penicillin kills only a few kinds of bacteria.

Appropriate  Something that is the easiest, safest, and most likely to work in a particular situation or condition.

Arkansas stone  A special stone used to sharpen dental instruments.

Aspirate  To breathe. An ‘aspirating syringe’ is one that can ‘breathe’, or allow liquid to go both in and out of the needle tip.

B

Baby teeth  The first set of teeth. There are 20 baby teeth, which are also called milk teeth or primary teeth.

Bacteria  Tiny germs that you can only see with a microscope and that cause many different infectious diseases.

Beeswax  Wax made by honey bees.

Bicuspids  The teeth between the canine teeth and the molars; premolars.

Bite  (1) To cut with the teeth. (2) The way the upper and lower teeth fit together when they close.

Blood pressure  The force, or pressure, of the blood flowing through the blood vessels (veins and arteries).

Blood vessels  Tubes that carry blood through the body. Veins and arteries.

Boil  (1) To heat water until it bubbles. (2) A swollen, inflamed lump with a pocket of pus under the skin. A kind of abscess.

Brand name  Trade name, the name a company gives to its product. A brand-name medicine is sold under a special name and is often more expensive than the same generic medicine.

Bridge  False teeth that are glued onto several nearby healthy teeth.

Buccal  Of the cheek. The buccal face of a tooth is the side facing the check.

Bulk  Large quantity or amount.

Calcium  A nutritional element which makes teeth strong and hard.

Calculus  Tartar.

Calories  Units of heat found in food, giving energy for the body to use.
Cancer A tumor or lump that grows and may keep growing until it causes death.

Canine teeth Also called cuspids, dog teeth, and eye teeth. These teeth have the longest roots of any tooth.

Carbohydrates Starches and sugars—foods that give energy. In this book they are called GO foods.

Caries Cavities; tooth decay.

Cavity A hole in a tooth where bacteria have entered.

Cement filling A temporary filling, which may protect a tooth for up to 6 months. Also see Filling.

Cementum The outer covering of the tooth's root.

Chronic Long-term or frequently recurring (compare with 'acute'). A chronic disease is one that lasts for a long time.

Colony Germs grouped together in one place.

Contagious disease A sickness that can be spread easily from one person to another.

Contraindication A situation or condition when a particular medicine should not be taken, or a certain treatment not given. For example, many medicines are contraindicated during pregnancy.

Crown The top 1/3 of the tooth, the part that is protected with hard enamel.

Curette A scaling instrument.

Cuspids Canine teeth.

Cyst An abnormal, sac-like growth in the body which is often filled with water.

Decay See Tooth Decay.

Dentition A whole set of teeth.

Dental floss See Floss.

Dental worker A health worker who works for healthy teeth and gums.

Dentist A professional who has advanced formal education in care of teeth and gums.

Dentures False teeth.

Diagnosis A decision made by a health worker about what a person's illness is.

Diet The kinds and amounts of foods that a person should eat or avoid eating.

Dislocation A bone that has slipped out of place at a joint.

Distal The side of the tooth that faces the back of the mouth. The opposite side from the 'mesial' side.

Drill An instrument used to change the shape of a cavity before placing a filling.

Duct A tube that carries liquid. For example, ducts carry spit from the spit gland to the mouth.

Elevator An instrument used to loosen a tooth before you take it out.

Enamel The protective layer that covers the crown (top part) of a tooth. The enamel is the hardest part of the body.

Epulis A tumor of the gums, usually found between the teeth.

Eruption The moment when a new tooth cuts through the gums and becomes visible in the mouth.

Evaluation A study to find out the value of something, or to find out what has been accomplished. Evaluations often compare different conditions before and after a new activity begins.

Examination A careful look at something; an investigation.

Expiration date The month and year marked on a medicine that tells when it will no longer be good. Throw away most medicines after this date.

Explorer See Probe.

Extraction Taking out a tooth.

False tooth A 'tooth' made of plastic or other material, used to replace a tooth that has been taken out.

Fever A body temperature higher than normal.

Fiber A fine, threadlike piece. A fibrous food like coconut contains a lot of fiber.

Filling Material put into the cavity in a tooth to prevent further decay.

First aid Emergency care or treatment for someone who is sick or injured.

Floss Special string used to clean between the teeth.

Fluoride A chemical which strengthens the teeth. Painted on the teeth, as an ingredient in toothpaste, or added to water for drinking or rinsing, fluoride enters and hardens the enamel. It is especially good for children's teeth.

Forceps Instruments used to pull teeth.

Fracture A broken bone.
Gauze  A material made of cotton, woven into an open mesh.

Generic name  The scientific name of a medicine. Usually different from the brand names given it by the different companies that make it.

Germ  Very small organisms that can grow in the body and cause some infectious diseases; bacteria.

Gram  A metric unit of weight. There are about 28 grams in an ounce. A paper clip weighs about 1 gram.

Groove  A long, narrow cut on the surface of back teeth. Grooves are ‘protected areas’ because food and germs can hide and remain in them longer.

Gum bubble  Also called a gum boil. A small abscess on the gums.

Gum disease  Illness that causes gums to become loose, red, and swollen, and to bleed when the teeth are cleaned.

Gum pocket  The space between the tooth and the flap of gums around it, forming a small pocket.

Gums  The skin around the teeth.

Infection  A sickness caused by bacteria or other germs. Infections may affect part of the body only (such as a sinus infection) or all of it (such as measles).

Infectious disease  A disease that is easily passed from one person to another; contagious disease.

Inflammation  An area that is red, hot, and painful, often because it is infected.

Inject  To give a medicine such as an immunization or anesthetic, using a syringe.

Joint  The place where two bones meet. When this book talks about the ‘pain in the joint’, it means the joint (called the ‘temporomandibular joint’) where the cheek and jaw bones meet.

Kilogram (kg)  One thousand grams. A ‘kilo’ weighs a little more than 2 pounds.

Labial  Of the lips. The labial side of a tooth is the face of the tooth nearest the lips.

Ligature wire  A thin, strong wire that bends easily, used to attach a loose tooth to a strong tooth.

Lingual  Of the tongue. The lingual side of a tooth is the face of the tooth nearest the tongue.

Malnutrition  Health problems caused by not eating enough of the foods that the body needs.

Mandible  The lower jaw bone.

Maxilla  The upper jaw bone.

Mesial  The side of the tooth that faces the front of the mouth; the opposite of ‘distal’.

Milligram (mg)  One thousandth of a gram.

Molar  The back teeth, used for grinding. Molars are the largest teeth in the mouth, with 2 or even 3 roots each.
N

Nerves Thin threads or strings that run from the brain to every part of the body and carry messages for feeling, pain or movement. There is a nerve, along with a blood vessel, in every root of every tooth.

Numb Without feeling; anesthetized. When teeth and the gums around them are numb, they cannot feel pain.

Nutrition The mixture of foods the body needs to grow, be healthy, and fight off disease.

O

Occlusal The biting surface, or top, of the tooth.

Oral Of the mouth. An oral medicine is one taken by mouth.

Organisms Living things (animals or plants).

P

Palate The roof or top part of the mouth.

Permanent filling A filling using a special metal or ceramic material which lasts for years.

Permanent teeth The 32 adult teeth which grow into the mouth to replace the baby teeth.

Petroleum jelly (petrolatum, Vaseline) A grease-like jelly used in preparing skin ointments.

Plaque A film or coating of germs that can form on the teeth, mix with food and make acid. You cannot see plaque unless you stain it.

Plate A set of false teeth.

Premolars The teeth between the molars and the canine teeth; bicuspids.

Prenatal Before birth.

Prevention Action taken to stop sickness before it starts.

Probe An instrument for examining teeth for tartar or other problems.

Protective foods Foods that are rich in vitamins and minerals. They help build healthy bodies and make people more able to resist or fight diseases. In this book they are called GLOW foods.

Proteins Body-building foods necessary for proper growth and strength. In this book they are called GROW foods.

Pus A yellow-white liquid found inside infections.

R

Records, reports Written information about sick persons and the treatment they receive. Records are for the personal use of the health worker, reports are written by one health worker to another to describe an illness and ask for further treatment.

Resistance The ability of something to defend itself against something that would normally harm or kill it. Many bacteria become resistant to the effects of certain antibiotics.

Rinse To hold a liquid in the mouth, moving around inside the mouth.

Risk The possibility of injury, loss, or harm. Danger.

Root The lower part of the tooth, under the gum, connected to the bone.

Root canal The hollow part of every root of a tooth, which has a blood vessel and a nerve inside.

Root canal treatment A special operation on a dead tooth to remove material from the root canal and replace it with filling material.

Root fibers Tiny fibers which hold the root of the tooth to the jaw bone.

S

Saliva Spit. Saliva helps us to swallow our food.

Scab The crust of dry blood that forms over a wound.

Scale To scrape the tartar off the teeth. A scaler is an instrument for scaling.

Scientific method A way of learning something. It begins with information, then an idea, and then the idea is tested against the information available.

Side effects Problems caused by using a medicine.

Signs The things or conditions to look for when you examine a sick person, to find out what sickness the person has. In this book the symptoms (the problems a person feels) are included with signs.

Sinus A hollow place inside the bone.

Socket The wound left after you take out a tooth.

Soft drinks Fizzy, carbonated drinks like Coca-Cola.
Spatula  An instrument used for mixing cement for fillings.

Starches  Energy foods like maize, rice, wheat, cassava, potatoes, and squash.

Sterile  Completely clean and free from living micro-organisms. Things usually are not sterile until you boil them or steam them.

Sterilize  To make things sterile by boiling or steaming for 30 minutes.

Sugars  Sweet foods like honey, sugar, or fruit that give energy but often cause tooth and gum problems.

Survey  A collection of facts about a small group of persons or things in the community. If the small group is not unusual, the survey results will describe the whole community.

Suture  A stitch made with needle and thread to sew up an opening or wound.

Swelling  An area of the skin that is abnormally large, puffed up. A swollen area is one that has swelling.

Symptoms  The feelings or conditions that sick persons report about their sickness. In this book, symptoms are included with signs.

Syringe  An instrument with a small sharp needle, for giving injections.

Tablespoon  A measuring spoon that holds 3 teaspoons or 15 ml.

Tartar  A hard, rocky coating on the tooth near the gums, also called calculus or toothstone. Tartar forms when old plaque mixes with calcium in the spit.

Teaspoon  A measuring spoon that holds 5 ml. Three teaspoons equal one tablespoon.

Teething  The action of new teeth cutting through the gums. Also see Eruption.

Temperature  The degree of heat of something, such as the air or a person’s body.

Temporary filling  A filling meant only to last until a permanent filling can be placed.

T.M.J.  The temporomandibular joint. See Joint.

Tooth abscess  See Abscess.

Tooth decay  Damage to the tooth caused by acid; cavities.

Toothache  Pain in a tooth.

Toothpaste  A paste for cleaning teeth.

Tongue depressor  A tongue blade; a piece of wood used to keep the tongue out of the way when examining or treating the teeth.

Top of the tooth  The part of the tooth that bites on food. For both upper and lower teeth, the biting surface is the ‘top’ and the root is at the ‘bottom’.

Topical  On top of the skin. A topical medicine is put on the skin.

Traditions  Practices, beliefs, or customs handed down from one generation to another by example or word of mouth.

Treatment  Care given by a health worker to fight an illness, attend to an injury, or prevent a new problem.

Tropical  Having to do with the tropics—the hot regions of the world.

Tumor  An abnormal mass of tissue without inflammation. Some tumors are due to cancer.

Tweezer  Small metal instrument for picking up cotton or small objects. Some persons use the word forceps for tweezers, but in this book, forceps are instruments for taking out a tooth.

U

Ulcer  A break in the skin or mucus membrane; a chronic open sore that can appear on the skin, gums, or gut.

V

Vaccinations  See Immunizations.

Vaseline  See Petroleum jelly.

Vessels  See Blood vessels.

Virus  Germs smaller than bacteria, which cause some infectious diseases, like measles or the common cold.

Vitamins  Ingredients in fruits and vegetables that our bodies need to work properly.

Volume  The amount of space a thing occupies. We measure volume in liters, ml, gallons, etc.

W

Weight  The heaviness or lightness of a thing. We measure weight in kilograms, mg, pounds, etc.

Wisdom teeth  The 3rd molars, which grow into the mouth when a person is 16-22 years old.

X

X-ray  A special photograph that allows you to see bone, roots of teeth, etc., under the skin.
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Where There Is No Doctor, by David Werner with Carol Thuman and Jane Maxwell. Perhaps the most widely used health care manual in the world, this book provides vital, easily understood information on how to diagnose, treat, and prevent common diseases. Emphasis is placed on prevention, including cleanliness, diet, and vaccinations, as well as the active role people must take in their own health care. 512 pages.

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