

Tooth Hypersensitivity

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Dentin sensitivity (DS) or dentinal hypersensitivity (DH) is one of the most commonly encountered clinical problems. It is clinically described as an exaggerated response to application of a stimulus to exposed dentin, regardless of its location. DH is a painful clinical condition with an incidence ranging from 4 to 74%. The variations in the reports may be because of difference in populations and different methods of investigations.

To review and upgrading knowledge of students on tooth hypersensitivity with available literature data.

Via an Internet survey, the authors collected data regarding methods used for diagnosis and treatment of dentin hypersensitivity.

Dentin hypersensitivity is a problem that plagues many patients. The initial or continued clinical cause, in the majority of situations, is gingival recession. The first step should be to identify and eliminate the cause. Patients should be informed of all the possible steps that may be necessary to eliminate their hypersensitivity. The next is to rectify the recession or seal the exposed dentinal tubules from the oral environment. If the patient is thoroughly informed of all the possible steps then they become a partner in the treatment process, identifying for the dentist when they want to proceed to the next step. This minimizes frustration on the patients part and facilitates the process.

Professionals should appreciate the role causative factors play in localizing and initiating hypersensitive lesions. It is important to identify these factors so that prevention can be included in the treatment plan. Active management of DH usually will involve a combination of at-home and in-office therapies. In Office Procedures: Fluoride varnish can be applied to exposed areas, strengthening the enamel and dentin; Fluoride foam or gel can be placed into a mouth tray; you then sit with this in your mouth for 3-5 minutes, providing the teeth with a high concentration of fluoride to strengthen the areas; Bonding agent, the material used to stick tooth colored restorations to teeth, can be used to seal the dentin surface and provide a barrier to the stimuli that cause sensitivity. At Home: Use a very soft bristle tooth brush, with low abrasive tooth paste; Brush correctly and do not over brush; Use a tooth paste specially formulated to soothe the nerve endings in the tooth; Use a high concentration fluoride toothpaste (given to you by the dental professional) to strengthen the tooth surface.