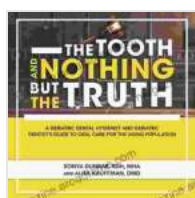


The Geriatric Dental Hygienist and Geriatric Dentist Guide to Oral Care for the Elderly

The elderly population is growing rapidly, and with it, the need for geriatric dental care. Geriatric dental hygienists and dentists play a vital role in providing oral care for this population, which has unique needs and challenges.



The Tooth and Nothing but the Truth: A Geriatric Dental Hygienist and Geriatric Dentist's Guide to Oral Care for the Aging Population

★★★★★ 5 out of 5

Language : English
File size : 8581 KB
Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 118 pages



This guide provides geriatric dental hygienists and dentists with the knowledge and skills they need to provide optimal oral care for the elderly. It covers a wide range of topics, including:

- The aging process and its effects on oral health
- Common oral health problems in the elderly
- Preventive oral care for the elderly

- Treatment of oral health problems in the elderly
- Communication with elderly patients and their families

The Aging Process and Its Effects on Oral Health

The aging process can have a significant impact on oral health. Some of the most common changes that occur with age include:

- **Reduced saliva production:** Saliva plays an important role in protecting the teeth and gums from decay and infection. As we age, saliva production decreases, which can lead to dry mouth and an increased risk of cavities and gum disease.
- **Changes in the teeth:** The teeth may become weaker and more brittle with age. They may also become discolored or stained.
- **Changes in the gums:** The gums may recede with age, which can expose the roots of the teeth. This can lead to sensitivity and pain.
- **Changes in the jawbone:** The jawbone may lose density with age, which can lead to loose teeth and difficulty wearing dentures.

Common Oral Health Problems in the Elderly

The elderly are more likely to experience a number of oral health problems, including:

- **Cavities:** Cavities are caused by bacteria that feed on the sugars in food and drinks. As we age, our saliva production decreases, which can lead to dry mouth and an increased risk of cavities.
- **Gum disease:** Gum disease is an infection of the gums and bone that support the teeth. It can lead to bleeding gums, loose teeth, and even

tooth loss.

- **Oral cancer:** Oral cancer is a type of cancer that occurs in the mouth. It can affect the lips, tongue, gums, and other parts of the mouth. Oral cancer is more common in the elderly.
- **Dentures:** Dentures are false teeth that are used to replace missing teeth. Dentures can be uncomfortable and difficult to wear, and they can also lead to oral health problems such as cavities and gum disease.

Preventive Oral Care for the Elderly

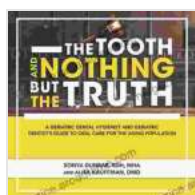
There are a number of things that geriatric dental hygienists and dentists can do to help prevent oral health problems in the elderly. These include:

- **Regular dental checkups and cleanings:** Regular dental checkups and cleanings can help to prevent cavities, gum disease, and other oral health problems. Geriatric dental hygienists and dentists can also provide fluoride treatments and sealants to help protect the teeth from decay.
- **Good oral hygiene:** Good oral hygiene is essential for maintaining good oral health. Geriatric dental hygienists and dentists can teach elderly patients how to brush and floss their teeth properly, and they can also recommend products that are designed for the elderly.
- **Healthy diet:** A healthy diet can help to protect the teeth and gums from decay and infection. Geriatric dental hygienists and dentists can recommend foods that are good for oral health, and they can also provide advice on how to avoid foods that are harmful to the teeth and gums.

- **Smoking cessation:** Smoking is a major risk factor for oral cancer and other oral health problems. Geriatric dental hygienists and dentists can help elderly patients quit smoking, and they can also provide support and resources to help them stay smoke-free.

Treatment of Oral Health Problems in the Elderly

If an elderly patient develops an oral health problem, geriatric dental hygienists and dentists can provide a variety of treatments.



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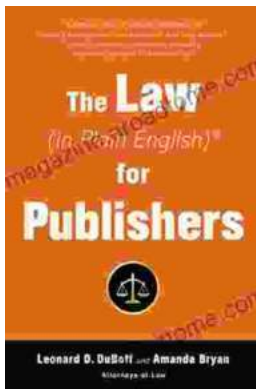
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