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Occupational hazards in prosthodontics amongst Interns

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Abstract---Background: To assess the incidence of occupational hazards while working in the department of prosthodontics amongst the interns of Institute of Dental Sciences, Jammu. Materials and methods: A closed ended questionnaire was prepared and circulated amongst 55 interns of Institute of Dental Sciences, Jammu to assess the types of occupational hazards encountered by them while working in prosthodontics. A total of 40 out of 55 interns completed the questionnaire and the response rate was 72.7%. Results: Most common occupational hazard in prosthodontics was of psychological stress (90%). The other most common hazards were injury from sharps like blades and knives (77.5%), burn injuries (67.5%), respiratory problems due to dusty environment (55%), allergic responses (40%) and communicable infections from patients (10%). A reasonably high percentage of interns were taking proper precautions while working in the department (85%). A fair percentage of interns kept first aid ready in case of an emergency (62.5%). Most of them agreed on the fact that prosthodontists were more prone to develop health problems (70%). Conclusion: Incidence of occupational hazards among the studied group was high but there was a lack of emergency measures being taken in case of a mishap. Therefore, there is a need to improve the availability of first aids and emergency drugs amongst the interns while working.

Keywords---emergency drugs, occupational hazards, prosthodontists.

Introduction

Occupational hazards are defined as a risk or hazard experienced in the work place. It can be of many types mainly:

- Chemical hazards

- Biological hazards
- Psychological hazards
- Physical hazards

Occupational hazards can vary in severity from minor injuries to allergic responses to even fatal injuries or effects. Department of Prosthodontics is considered to be one of the most prone departments to occupational hazards in dentistry. Prosthodontics work poses many risk to its employees. A study conducted on dentists in Bellary city, Karnataka showed that 92.4% of dentists faced physical hazards, 13.6% faced chemical hazards, 63.6% faced biological hazards and 78.7% faced psychological hazards. Another Norwegian study showed that 40% of the dentists complained of dermatoses, 13% complained of eye, respiratory and systemic problems and 3% complained of musculoskeletal problems. The intent of this questionnaire based study was to highlight and gather information about the extent of awareness about occupational hazards and ways to prevent it among dental interns of Institute of Dental Sciences, Jammu.

Results

On analysing the results and responses it was observed that the most common occupational hazard in prosthodontics was of psychological stress (90%). The other most common hazards were injury from sharps like blades and knives (77.5%), burn injuries (67.5%), respiratory problems due to dusty environment (55%), allergic responses (40%) and communicable infections from patients (10%). A reasonably high percentage of interns were taking proper precautions while working in the department (85%). A fair percentage of interns kept first aid ready in case of an emergency (62.5%). Most of them agreed on the fact that prosthodontists were more prone to develop health problems (70%).

Conclusion

Incidence of occupational hazards among the studied group was high but there was a lack of emergency measures being taken in case of a mishap. Therefore, there is a need to improve the availability of first aids and emergency drugs amongst the interns while working.

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