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Journal homepage: www.ijohd.org**Letter to editor****Addressing problem of nocturnal dental pain and emergency treatment for patients****Tushar Gurav^{1,*}, Shweta Juneja¹, Sheetal Choudhari²**¹YMT Dental College and Hospital, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India²Dept. of Oral Pathology and Microbiology, YMT Dental College and Hospital, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India**ARTICLE INFO***Article history:*

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As we all know dental pain is one of the most unpleasant and uncomfortable ordeal one could undergo. When a person suffers from dental pain it affects their daily routine and ultimately quality of life.

At night pain is usually more intensified, changing body postures also elevate the pain because when a person lays down there is greater amount of pressure from blood flowing thus aggravating the pain.¹

The most common cause of developing dental pain is not maintaining good oral hygiene leading to accumulation of plaque and calculus, these influence the progression of dental caries into the pulp causing pulpitis which causes pain. Deep caries affects the nerve fibres which cause continuous throbbing pain at night. At night, pain is more intensified because our brain is more aware about the sensations. Sleep and pain are related, sleep complaints are present in 67-88% of chronic pain disorders and at least 50% of the individuals with insomnia.²

Quality of Life

As dental pain is universal, people of all age groups and gender may suffer from this. It has been observed in a study of 1,052 individuals, the prevalence of toothache in school going children in last 6 months is 33.6%.³

If timely treatment is not given to the patient, the pain might get aggravated leading to future complications like dentoalveolar abscess, swelling, osteomyelitis, locked jaw; some could be even life threatening like Ludwig's angina. Spread of infection could cause dementia even Alzheimer's, heart blockages and premature cancer.⁴

This can be controlled by providing dental treatments on time for swellings and abscess. Emergency RCTs and other forms of dental emergency treatments should be available even at night. Emergency dental centres should be made commonly available especially in rural areas as there is lack of knowledge about oral health and hygiene, lack of systemic infrastructure, deficiencies that prevent proper screening and dental care of oral disease. In rural India, the dentist to population ratio is low as 1 dentist for every 250,000 residents whereas in urban India the ratio is 1 dentist per 10,000 population this imbalance indicates that there is lack of dental professionals in rural areas,⁵ also dental services by dentists and dental assistants should be available for a whole 24 hours and 7 days of the week. Though emergency night dental clinics are getting established, they are not available everywhere. There needs to be dental awareness and treatment options available for the general population so that they could suffer less and hence improving the quality of life.

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