Oral Care Practices for Seriously Ill and Nursing Home Patients

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EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

It is the position of the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association that audiologists and speech-language pathologists incorporate the principles of evidence-based practice in clinical decision making to provide high quality clinical care. The term evidence-based practice refers to an approach in which current, high-quality research evidence is integrated with practitioner expertise and client preferences and values into the process of making clinical decisions.

Participants are encouraged to actively seek and critically evaluate the evidence basis for clinical procedures presented in this and other educational programs.

*Adopted by the Scientific and Professional Education Board, April 2006*
INTRODUCTION

This program equips you with knowledge and tools to assess the risks of poor oral hygiene and implement protocols for oral cleanliness and disease prevention. Topics include biochemical and biomechanical functions of the oral cavities; biofilms, flora, and pathogens; effects of serious illness on the oral cavity, larynx, and immune system; classifications and predictors of pneumonias; and relationships among oral care, diseases, and illnesses (including associated symptoms, such as dysphagia). Specific observational and formal risk assessment tools are provided, along with a review of evidence-based oral care programs.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

You will be able to:

- Discuss physiological changes to the oropharyngeal environment and their causes resulting from serious illness onset
- Trace the implications of oropharyngeal changes in the development of pneumonia in acute and critically ill patients and nursing care residents
- Use observational and formal assessment tools to determine the potential risk of improper or poor oral hygiene to patients/residents
- Describe the roles of the health care team to ensure proper care of the oropharynx

PROGRAM HISTORY

Original air date: June 8, 2011
Peer reviewed: April 23, 2012, and March 6, 2015
Available through: March 6, 2018

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

To earn continuing education credit, you must complete the test with a passing score on or before March 6, 2018.

To see if this program has been renewed after this date, please search by title in ASHA’s online store at www.asha.org/shop.

This course is offered for 0.2 ASHA CEUs (Intermediate level, Professional area).