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Assessment of anxiety frequency and its trigger factors in patients referred to general dental offices in the city of Hamedan in 2005

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Abstract:

Background and Aim: Oral health is a sign of overall health. Sometimes fear of dental office deprives patients from receiving proper care. This problem decreases the self-esteem of dentists and can also reduce health indices. Understanding anxiety factors may help solve this problem. The purpose of this study was to assess anxiety in patients undergoing treatment in dental offices in the city of Hamedan.

Materials and Methods: In this analytic cross sectional study patients above 9 years old and referred to general dental offices in Hamedan were randomly selected and surveyed with questionnaires in two stages. The first questionnaire included 17 standard items based on Dental Anxiety Scale (DAS) and screened anxious patients. Then 400 anxious patients were evaluated with a questionnaire of 64 items based on Corah scale. Data were analyzed by SPSS 13 with multivariate analysis of variance. $P < 0.05$ was considered as the level of significance.

Results: Factors related to dental office environment with 31.1%, those related to personal imaginations with 19.4% and factor concerning office management and dental treatment each with 19.1% frequency showed to be most related to anxiety in patients. Improper rest-rooms (46.3%), blood stains in the environment (44.5%) and dirty dentist's gowns (43.8%) were reported to be the most prominent environmental factors. Among the factors originated from personal imaginations, the risk of disease transmission was accounted for the most justifiable source of anxiety (67.3%). Regarding factors concerning office management, dentist's nervous behavior (47.8%) and his carelessness to the patient (46.8%) were considered as the most significant anxiety sources. Extraction, injection and root canal therapy (48.3%, 44.5%, 44.3%) were the treatment related factors of higher importance respectively. Previous painful treatment experience (47.3%) and poor oral hygiene of the dentist (34.5%) were reported to be among the other justifiable anxiety sources. In all mentioned situations, variations in anxiety factors were significantly higher in women.

Conclusion: This study showed that the main cause of anxiety in patients undergoing treatment in dental offices in Hamedan is their personal imagination which is by far more obvious in women than men.

Keywords:

Anxiety, Fear, General dental office, Fear, General dental office

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