

SELF-PERCEIVED HALITOSIS AND ORAL HYGIENE HABITS AMONG SCHOOL STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Aim: The aim of this study is to evaluate oral hygiene habits among school students and about the self-perceived halitosis.

Objective: Brushing methods, oral hygiene aids, and use of products for good oral health will be evaluated.

Background: A structured questionnaire consisting of 15 questions was administered to 120 school students. The questionnaire was designed to evaluate the self-perception of halitosis, oral hygiene aids used, presence of caries, gingival bleeding, and dryness of mouth.

Reason: Halitosis is characterized by unpleasant odor arising from the oral cavity. The prevalence of halitosis is not studied extensively among school students. Hence, this study is done to create awareness of oral hygiene habits among school students.

Keywords: Oral health, Halitosis, Teeth, Brush, School students, Habits.

INTRODUCTION

Halitosis is referred as unpleasant odor emitted from a person's oral cavity. Fetororis, oral malodor, or bad breath are the other common names that are used to denote halitosis. Poor oral hygiene, improper clean of dentures, decrease salivary flow rate, use of tobacco in any form, or systematic condition causes halitosis [1]. Intraoral or extraoral factors are attributed to its etiology. Deep caries, lesions, periodontal disease, mucosal ulcers, food debris, reduce salivary flow rates, or tongue coating are the reasons for the causes of intraoral in 90% of cases [2]. The most common reason listed among the intraoral causes for halitosis is tongue coating [3]. Volatile sulfide compounds (VSC's), especially are the main compounds that lead to bad breath originating from the oral cavity [4]. *Treponema Denticola*, *Porphyromonas gingivalis*, *Prevotella intermedia*, *Enterobacteriaceae*, for synthesis, centipede periodontitis, and *Fusobacterium nucleatum* that inhabit the oral cavity are produced by the anaerobic microorganisms [5]. The sulfur-containing substances that are present in saliva, gingival crevicular fluid, blood, and cells leading to production of odiferous products are interacted by the microorganisms [6].

METHODS

About 120 school students were involved in this study. A pilot population before its administration was given a structured questionnaire which was made and tested on them. Modifications and response were evaluated wherever necessary. The questionnaire included 15 questions which evaluated the self-perception of halitosis and its treatment. The subjects including tooth brushing frequency, use of interdental aids, and mouth rinses were also evaluated. There was no identification column for the individual. Questions and clarifications were explained to the participants. All the participants were comfortable with English language, and so the questionnaire was in English.

Questions

1. Can you smell your own breath? Yes/no
2. Do you brush your teeth twice a day? Yes/no
3. Do you use mouthwash regularly? Yes/no
4. Do you have dental caries? Yes/no

5. Do you have bleeding gums? Yes/no
6. Do you dryness of mouth? Yes/no
7. Do you use tongue cleaner? Yes/no
8. Have you ever received any professional treatment for your breath? Yes/no
9. Has your breath interfered social/workplace? Yes/no
10. Do you use toothbrush with hard bristles? Yes/no
11. Do you check your teeth in mirror after brushing? Yes/no
12. Do you use floss? Yes/no
13. Do your gums tend to bleed when you brush? Yes/no
14. Do you go for a regular dental checkup? Yes/no
15. Do you have thick pasty saliva? Yes/no

RESULT

According to the observation, we can say that the self-perceived halitosis and oral hygiene among school students is good.

DISCUSSION

According to our knowledge, this was the first study on halitosis among the school students. The data on its prevalence are important as it is a common problem with personal, professional, and social effects. The prevalence of halitosis ranges to around 50% in the USA [7], 27.5% in China [8], and 22% in France [9] was revealed by literature. Thus, the significance of halitosis is considered as one of the global problems. Oral malodor affects 8-50% of people in developed country [10]. Minimal treatment is given by the practitioners for halitosis. Individuals discerned the presence or absence of halitosis on their own. The causes of etiology are intra and extraoral. There are no standard criteria to define a patient with halitosis [1]. Females showed greater self-perception of halitosis. This result when compared to the previous ones was similar [6,11,12]. The individual's psychopathological profile is related to psycho issue with multifactorial etiology of self-perceived halitosis [13]. The younger individuals are affected by oral malodor which has been attributed to tongue coating in the absence of periodontal disease [14]. The tongue will be likely in the source of odor if the oral hygiene is good or improves oral malodor. Tongue cleaner was minimal. This is the reason for self-perception of halitosis. Oral malodor and the level of VSC's on the dorsal surface of tongue correlates positively [15,16]. Scraping the tongue can be used to reduce oral malodor. The participants reported that they brushed twice a day, and

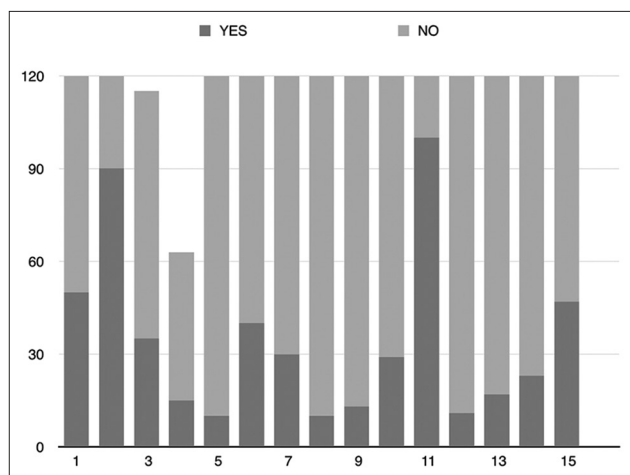


Fig. 1: Graph showing the yes and no ratio

their oral hygiene was excellent. The subject population was comprised students. The people having poor oral hygiene and periodontal disease should brush twice a day which significantly reduce oral malodor [17].

Table 1: Questions percentage

Questions	Yes (%)	No (%)
Can you smell your own breath?	41.66	58.4
Do you brush your teeth twice a day?	75	25
Do you use mouth wash regularly?	29.16	70.84
Do you have dental caries?	12.5	87.5
Do you have bleeding gums?	8.33	91.67
Do you dryness of mouth?	33.33	66.67
Do you use tongue cleaner?	25	75
Have you ever received any professional treatment for your breath?	8.33	91.67
Has your breath interfered social/work place?	10.83	89.17
Do you use toothbrush with hard bristles?	24.16	75.84
Do you check your teeth in mirror after brushing?	83.33	16.67
Do you use floss?	9.16	90.84
Do your gums tend to bleed when you brush?	14.16	85.84
Do you go for a regular dental check-up?	19.16	80.84
Do you have thick pasty saliva?	39.16	60.84

CONCLUSION

The school students have better oral hygiene in this study than the previous ones. The students even have a good knowledge on how to maintain their oral health.

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