

# ASSESSMENT OF DENTAL HYGIENE PRACTICES AMONG PATIENTS ATTENDING A FAMILY MEDICINE CLINIC IN MADINAH

Sultan Rajy Alanazi<sup>1\*</sup>, Ali Yahya Alhaidan<sup>2</sup>

*\*Corresponding Author:*

---

## **Abstract**

*This study aims to assess dental hygiene practices among patients attending a family medicine clinic in Madinah. With the growing recognition of oral health's role in overall health, understanding patient behaviors and practices is essential. A cross-sectional study was conducted, utilizing a structured questionnaire to collect data from 100 patients. The results revealed significant gaps in dental hygiene practices, highlighting the need for targeted interventions. The findings emphasize the importance of educational programs to improve dental health awareness and practices among patients.*

## INTRODUCTION

Dental hygiene is a critical aspect of overall health, significantly impacting general well-being and the prevention of various diseases. Poor dental hygiene can lead to periodontal disease, cavities, and other health complications, including cardiovascular diseases and diabetes. In Madinah, where cultural practices, access to dental care, and socioeconomic factors may influence hygiene behaviors, understanding patient practices is crucial for formulating appropriate interventions.

Previous studies have indicated that many individuals lack awareness of proper dental care techniques, such as brushing, flossing, and the frequency of dental visits, which are vital for maintaining optimal oral health (Alshahrani et al., 2021). Despite global health campaigns emphasizing oral health, localized studies that address dental hygiene practices in specific regions, such as Madinah, remain limited. This research aims to evaluate dental hygiene practices among patients at a family medicine clinic in Madinah, assessing their knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors regarding oral hygiene. The study seeks to fill the gap in the literature by focusing on a population that may be underrepresented in current research, offering insights into the dental health practices in Madinah, and providing recommendations for improving patient outcomes.

## Methods

This study employed a cross-sectional design conducted at a family medicine clinic in Madinah. A total of 100 patients aged 18 years and older were randomly selected to participate in the study. Ethical approval was obtained from the clinic's review board, and informed consent was secured from all participants.

A structured questionnaire was developed to gather data on various aspects of dental hygiene practices. The questionnaire included sections on demographic information, knowledge about dental hygiene, self-reported practices, and attitudes toward oral health. The questions were designed to capture comprehensive data on patient behaviors, including frequency of tooth brushing, use of dental floss, and regularity of dental check-ups. Moreover, questions related to dietary habits and their perceived impact on oral health were included to gain a broader understanding of lifestyle factors influencing dental hygiene.

Data collection was performed over two weeks, and participants completed the questionnaires during their routine clinic visits. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS version 25. Descriptive statistics were calculated for demographic variables, while chi-square tests were employed to evaluate associations between variables. Data was also stratified based on gender, education, and age to identify specific trends within subgroups of the population.

## Results

The study sample comprised 100 participants, with a mean age of 35 years ( $SD = 10.5$ ). The demographic characteristics revealed that 60% were female, and 40% were male. Regarding education, 40% had completed secondary school, while 30% had a university degree.

### Knowledge about Dental Hygiene:

- 75% of participants reported being aware of proper brushing techniques.
- Only 50% knew the recommended duration for brushing (2 minutes).
- 30% acknowledged the importance of flossing, while 10% reported using mouthwash regularly.

### Self-Reported Practices:

- 65% of participants brushed their teeth twice daily.
- 20% reported visiting a dentist for regular check-ups, while 30% only visited when experiencing pain.
- 50% indicated they had never received formal education on dental hygiene.

### Attitudes toward Oral Health:

- 70% believed that oral health is essential for overall health.
- 60% expressed a desire for more information on maintaining proper dental hygiene.

Statistical analysis showed significant associations between educational level and knowledge of proper dental practices ( $p < 0.05$ ). Participants with higher education levels were more likely to report practicing good dental hygiene. Gender differences were also observed, with females reporting better adherence to daily dental hygiene practices compared to males ( $p < 0.05$ ).

## Discussion

The findings of this study highlight significant gaps in dental hygiene practices among patients attending the family medicine clinic in Madinah. Despite a general awareness of the importance of oral health, many participants lacked specific knowledge and consistent practices essential for maintaining good dental hygiene. The results underscore the need for improved public health initiatives focused on oral hygiene, particularly for those with lower education levels, who may have less exposure to information on dental care.

The low rates of regular dental check-ups and flossing indicate the need for enhanced educational initiatives to promote awareness about the importance of oral health. Targeted community programs that emphasize preventive care and proper hygiene techniques could help bridge the knowledge gap observed in this study.

Furthermore, the association between education level and dental hygiene knowledge suggests that efforts to improve education and awareness should be tailored to different demographics. Implementing educational programs in collaboration with local healthcare providers could enhance knowledge and encourage better dental hygiene practices across the community.

### Conclusion

This study underscores the need for improved dental hygiene practices among patients in Madinah. The gaps identified in knowledge and practices emphasize the importance of targeted educational interventions. Increasing awareness about dental hygiene and promoting regular dental visits can significantly enhance patients' oral health and overall well-being.

### Recommendations for Future Research

Future studies should explore the effectiveness of educational interventions in improving dental hygiene practices. Furthermore, qualitative research could provide deeper insights into the barriers patients face regarding dental care and hygiene.

### Reference

Alshahrani, S., Alshuaibi, A., Alkhaldi, M., & Koppolu, P. (2021, May). Perception and knowledge of patients from different regions in the kingdom of Saudi Arabia towards oral hygiene and oral hygiene aids. In *Healthcare* (Vol. 9, No. 5, p. 592). MDPI.

## Questionnaire: Assessment of Dental Hygiene Practices among Patients Attending a Family Medicine Clinic in Madinah

### Section A: Demographic Information

#### 1. Age:

- 18–24
- 25–34
- 35–44
- 45–54
- 55 and above

#### 2. Gender:

- Male
- Female

#### 3. Level of Education:

- No formal education
- Primary school
- Secondary school
- College diploma
- University degree
- Postgraduate degree

#### 4. Occupation:

- Student
- Employed
- Self-employed
- Unemployed
- Retired

---

### Section B: Knowledge of Dental Hygiene

#### 5. How often should one brush their teeth per day?

- Once
- Twice
- Three times
- After every meal
- Don't know

#### 6. How long should you brush your teeth?

- Less than 1 minute
- 1–2 minutes

- More than 2 minutes
- Don't know

7. Are you aware of the correct technique for brushing teeth?

- Yes
- No

8. Is flossing an important part of dental hygiene?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

9. How often should you visit a dentist for a check-up?

- Once every 6 months
- Once a year
- Only when in pain
- Never

---

### Section C: Dental Hygiene Practices

10. How often do you brush your teeth?

- Once a day
- Twice a day
- Three times a day
- Occasionally

11. Do you use dental floss?

- Yes, regularly
- Yes, but rarely
- No

12. How often do you visit the dentist?

- Regularly (every 6 months)
- Occasionally (once a year)
- Only when in pain
- Never

13. Do you use mouthwash as part of your dental routine?

- Yes
- No

14. Have you ever received professional advice or education on dental hygiene?

- Yes
- No

---

### Section D: Attitudes toward Dental Hygiene

15. Do you believe that maintaining oral hygiene affects overall health?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

16. How confident are you in your current dental hygiene routine?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not confident

17. Would you like to receive more information about how to improve your dental hygiene?

- Yes
- No

18. How important do you think regular dental check-ups are for maintaining oral health?

- Very important
  - Somewhat important
  - Not important
- 

**Section E: Dietary Habits**

19. How often do you consume sugary snacks or drinks?

- Daily
- A few times a week
- Occasionally
- Never

20. Do you think your diet affects your dental health?

- Yes
  - No
  - Not sure
- 

**Section F: Feedback and Suggestions**

21. What challenges do you face when maintaining good dental hygiene? (Open-ended)

22. What improvements or services would you like to see at this clinic to help with your dental care? (Open-ended)