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Original Research Paper

Dental Science

AWARENESS OF ORAL AND MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY IN PEOPLE OF NORTH HARYANA

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION: Oral & Maxillofacial surgery is one of the surgical specialties in Dentistry. It is considered as missing link between dentistry & medicine. But there is a very poor understanding about this specialty in general public. This paper attempts to find out the awareness of the specialty amongst the youth of north Haryana.

MATERIALS AND METHODS: A questionnaire was given to 500 undergraduate engineering students. Fifteen most common problems were chosen and respondents were asked to choose the most appropriate specialty which they think will treat the given problem.

RESULTS: While minor dental trauma and salivary gland tumors were recognized to be mainly treated by oral & maxillofacial surgeons, the other problems were poorly recognized.

CONCLUSION: This study highlights the need to promote the awareness of dentistry in general & maxillofacial surgery in particular among general population.

KEYWORDS : Dentistry; Oral and maxillofacial surgery, Awareness.

INTRODUCTION

Dentistry is one of the fastest growing specialties of medicine in the world. In India the scope of dentistry has also increased enormously due to increased awareness which can be attributed to increased literacy rate. Though the perception about dental health has increased but general population is still not apprised of different specialties in dentistry. Amid the most advanced branches of dentistry is the Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery. Oral and maxillofacial surgery is the subspecialty of dental/medical science that deals with the management of varieties of pathologic conditions of the jaw, mouth, and face[Anjani Kumar Yadav et al 2019]. It was initially developed as a branch of surgical dentistry by dentists who had a special interest in surgery. In World War II, the speciality increased its limit to include maxillofacial trauma by a few dedicated units in the UK and the USA. Then over a period of time, worldwide the scope expanded to include facial deformity correction, pathology of head and neck (both benign and malignant), cleft lip and palate, bone grafting, facial deformity correction, craniofacial surgery, aesthetic facial surgery, TMJ surgery and implant procedures.

Awareness about this speciality among the masses in urban India is increasing rapidly due to increase in number of maxillofacial surgeons practising in small cities. But still there is incognizance regarding the wider horoizon of this branch. Previous studies conducted in the USA and the UK have reported that the medical and dental fraternity and the general public are largely unaware of the scope of maxillofacial surgery and the type of work being done by maxillofacial units. [Ameerally P et al (1994) Michael JH et al (1996)]

We, therefore conducted a study to check the awareness about oral & maxillofacial surgery as a speciality in North Haryana.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was carried out in Maharishi Markandeshwar (MM) Deemed to be University Mullana (Ambala), Haryana.

A written questionnaire was prepared and was given to 500 engineering students. The questionnaire consisted of 15 common anomalies and the subjects were asked to mark with a tick, the speciality they thought was most appropriate to deal with the problem. A prototype of the written questionnaire can be seen in the table 1:

RESULTS

Data collected was tabulated and analysed ; following observations were derived. For wisdom teeth it was found that 63% of the respondents thought that general dentists were most appropriate while for 37% oral and maxillofacial surgeons were most appropriate while none of the respondents selected any other specialist .This shows very few people are aware that for wisdom tooth removal the most appropriate specialist is a maxillofacial surgeon. For treatment of facial lacerations 30% of respondents chose plastic surgeon, 24% general surgeon, 19% dental surgeon, 23% maxillofacial surgeon, 3% ENT surgeon while 1% chose orthopedic surgeon. This shows that most of respondents believe that plastic surgeon will be the best specialist to treat facial wounds closely followed by general surgeon and maxillofacial surgeon.

For fractures of lower jaw 25% chose dental surgeon, 30% maxillofacial surgeon, 24% orthopedic surgeon,15% plastic surgeon, 6% ENT surgeon and 1% general surgeon. This shows that most people know that for treatment of fractures of lower jaw maxillofacial surgeons and dental surgeons are most appropriate. For fractures of upper jaw, 21% chose dental surgeon, 23% maxillofacial surgeon, 20% orthopedic surgeons, 25% plastic surgeon, 11% ENT surgeon and none general surgeon. This shows that for treatment of upper jaw fractures respondents were of a divided opinion. For fractures of cheek bone, 5% chose dental surgeons, 28% maxillofacial surgeons, 22% orthopedic surgeon, 35% Plastic surgeons, 9% ENT surgeon and none general surgeon. For fractures of bone around eye 2% preferred dental surgeons, 28% maxillofacial surgeons, 10% orthopedic surgeon, 38% Plastic surgeons, 9% ENT surgeon and 10% general surgeon. This shows that for the treatment of fractures of zygomatic bone & orbit most respondents believe that plastic surgeon is specialist of choice though maxillofacial surgeons were also chosen by large no. of respondents.

For facial deformity correction, 15% chose dental surgeons, 28% maxillofacial surgeons, 9% orthopedic surgeon, 39% Plastic surgeons, 9% ENT surgeon and none general surgeon. This shows that for the treatment of facial deformities majority respondents believe that plastic surgeon is specialist of choice though maxillofacial surgeons were also chosen by large no. of respondents.For treatment of cleft lip & palate, 15% chose dental surgeon, 28% maxillofacial surgeon, 9% orthopedic surgeon, 28% Plastic surgeon, 29% ENT surgeon and none general surgeon. This shows that for the treatment of cleft lip and palate there is no clear cut choice this can be due to low incidence of cleft lip and palate in this part of country.

For treatment of oral cancer, 17% chose dental surgeon, 18% maxillofacial surgeon, none chose orthopedic surgeon, 18% Plastic surgeon, 33% ENT surgeon and 14% general surgeon. This shows that for the treatment of oral cancers most respondents believe that ENT surgeon is specialist of choice. For treatment of facial abscess, 15% chose dental surgeon, 28% maxillofacial surgeon, none chose orthopedic surgeon, 20% Plastic surgeon, 23% ENT surgeon and 17% general surgeon. This shows that for the treatment of facial abcess most respondents believe that maxillofacial surgeon & ENT surgeon are specialist of choice.

For dental implants, 65% chose dental surgeon, 34% maxillofacial surgeon, 1% orthopedic surgeon, none chose plastic surgeon, ENT surgeon or general surgeon .For TMJ Disorders, 25% chose dental surgeon, 31% maxillofacial surgeon, 20% orthopedic surgeon, 24 % ENT surgeon and none chose plastic surgeon or general surgeon. This shows that for the treatment of TMJ disorders most respondents are confused about specialist of choice .

For Sinus disorders, 31% preferred s maxillofacial surgeon, 63% ENT surgeon, 6% dental surgeon and none chose general surgeon, plastic surgeon or orthopedic surgeon. This shows that for the treatment of Sinus disorders majority respondents believe that ENT surgeon is specialist of choice .

For Salivary Gland Disorders, 31% chose maxillofacial surgeon, 35% ENT surgeon, 14% dental surgeon, 20% general surgeon and none plastic surgeon or orthopedic surgeon. This shows that for the treatment of Salivary gland disorders majority respondents believe that ENT surgeon & maxillofacial surgeons are specialist of choice

For disorders of tongue, 26% chose maxillofacial surgeon, 35% ENT surgeon, 14% dental surgeon, 15% general surgeon, 10% plastic surgeon and none orthopedic surgeon. This shows that for the treatment of disorders of tongue majority respondents believe that ENT surgeon is specialist of choice .

From our study we concluded that the general public is oblivious about the role & scope of dentistry in general and maxillofacial surgery in particular. Most of the people were clear about the role of maxillofacial surgeons in doing wisdom tooth removal. For the treatment of facial trauma, respondents were confused between maxillofacial surgeons and plastic surgeons. In this study, the word maxillofacial trauma wasn't used because it could have been self explanatory and most people would have chosen maxillofacial surgeons. We divided trauma into lower jaw, upper jaw, cheek bone & bones around eye. For treatment of fractures in lower jaw, respondents were confused between dentists, maxillofacial surgeons, orthopedic surgeons and plastic surgeons equally, showing slightly more preference towards maxillofacial surgeons. Almost similar trends were seen for fractures of upper jaw where respondents seemed more inclined towards plastic surgeons.

CONCLUSION

An awareness regarding the comprehensive and broader aspect of oral and maxillofacial surgery branch needs to be created since it is very important to promote the speciality among the general population as this study reflects lack of knowledge about it amongst masses.

Another reason for the same is difficult to remember the branch "oral and maxillofacial surgery" name as is the case of Otorhinolaryngologists which are vernacularly known as ENT surgeons which makes general population to easily relate and remember. We should be better known as "Facial Surgeons" as this gives a clear idea about nature of work that is done by us and it is very easy to pronounce and remember by a layman.

Table 1 Pick tick the most appropriate specialist for the given medical conditions:

	Dental Surgeon	Plastic Surgeon	Maxillofacial Surgeon	ENT Surgeon	Orthopedic Surgeon	General Surgeon
Wisdom tooth removal						
Facial injury (Cut/laceration)						
Fracture of the lower jaw						
Fractures of upper jaw						
Fracture of Cheek Bone						
Fracture of bone around eye						
Facial deformity (irregular face)						
Cleft lip and palate						
Oral (Mouth) cancer						
Facial abscess						
Dental Implants						
TMJ (Jaw Joint) disorders						
Sinus problems						
Salivary Gland Disorders						
Disorders of tongue						

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