

Review Article**Fashion trends in dentistry**

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ABSTRACT

Younger generations follow their self made rules for looking fashionable and it applies to dentistry as well. As a dentist, we might come across to people who demand something more from us than treating only diseases e.g. piercings, mutilations, tattoos, jewellery. So being a dentist of 21st century, we should have knowledge of these newer advances in addition to regular therapeutic procedures.

Key words: Fashion, Oral and perioral piercings, Dental tattoos, Tooth jewellery

INTRODUCTION

This article highlights oral piercings, dental tattoos and tooth jewellery. Fashion is an ever changing world and the rules of this dynamics also apply to dentistry. Previously dentistry was something that was equated only with pain, fear and discomfort. But gradually times have changed. Dentistry and dental treatments are now one of the necessary aspects of a healthy life and down the line fashion aspects are also getting incorporated into it. Aesthetics is most selling point of dentistry. But other than normal aesthetic and smile enhancing procedures, few more aspects of dentistry have developed that can be truly called as out of the box fashion. These are oral piercings, dental tattoos and tooth jewellery. But we can find that tooth fashion or decoration actually was practiced long time back in many Asian cultures.

ORAL PIERCINGS

Piercing the tongue was regarded first by the Mayans of around 700BC and later, the Aztec civilizations of Central America, as a highly spiritual practice and was reserved only for high priests and royals. But in 1521, the Spanish conquistadors arrived on the American continent, and they wiped out both the Aztec people and their practice of tongue piercing [1]. In western medical literature, first case of tongue piercing appears in 1992. The emergence of tongue piercing in modern times has deep sexual connotations, as do many piercings. However, it should be added, as the popularity of this piercing has broadened into mainstream society, this sexual significance has been

diluted. It has given way to the desire to look cool. Lip piercing has been practiced for thousands of years and continues in many parts of the world even today. Men of the African Makololo tribe insert wooden plugs into the lips of women as signs of their ownership and it is seen by the members of the tribe as a sign of great beauty.



As adopted by the ADA in October, 1998 and amended in October, 2004, Piercing is becoming a more prevalent form of body art and self-expression in modern society. However, oral piercings which involve the tongue (the most common site), lips, cheeks, uvula or a combination of sites, have been implicated in a number of adverse oral and systemic conditions [1-3]. Patients typically undergo piercing procedures without an anaesthetic. In tongue piercing, for example, a barbell-shaped piece of jewellery typically is placed to transverse the thickness of the tongue at the midline in its anterior one-third using a needle. Initially, a temporary device longer than the jewellery

of choice is placed to accommodate post piercing swelling. The free end of the barbell stem then is inserted into the hole in a ventral-dorsal direction. The recipient grasps the free end of the shank between the maxillary and mandibular anterior teeth and screws the ball onto the stem. The barbell also can be placed laterally, with the studs on the dorsolateral lingual surface. In the absence of complications, healing takes four to six weeks.

In lip or cheek piercing, jewellery position is determined primarily by aesthetics with consideration to where the jewellery will rest intraorally. Once position is determined, a cork is usually placed inside the mouth to support the tissue as it is pierced with a needle. The needle is inserted through the tissue and into the cork backing [4]. The needle then is replaced with the labrette stud, and the disc backing is screwed into place. Healing time can range from weeks to months. Body piercing is a popular form of self-expression.

Tongue splitting is considered by some to be a form of body art. The process literally splits a person's tongue into two pieces, creating a "forked" appearance. Various primitive techniques are used by lay people for splitting tongues. For example, without anaesthesia, a scalpel may be used followed by a cauterizing pen, or fishing line may be threaded through the pierced tongue and pulled forward, severing the anterior aspect. Individuals regularly pull the two tongue pieces apart to maintain the split so it does not "heal" back together. Once healed, additional surgery may be required to repair the "split".

Oral piercings or tongue splitting may look cool, but they can be dangerous to health [4-6]. That's because mouth contains millions of bacteria, and infection [7] and swelling often occur with mouth piercings [8]. For instance, mouth and tongue could swell so much that it can close off airway or can possibly choke the patient if part of the jewellery breaks off in mouth [5]. In some cases, tooth may crack if one bite down too hard on piercing. Repeated clicking of the jewellery against teeth can also cause damage. Oral piercing could also lead to more serious infections, like hepatitis [9-11] or endocarditis [12]. Piercing of tongue [13,14], lips [15], cheeks or uvula can interfere with speech, chewing or swallowing [15,17]. Other complications include infection, pain and swelling, damage to gums [15-19], teeth and fillings, hypersensitivity to metals [20,21], nerve damage, excessive drooling, dental treatment difficulties.

American Dental Association opposes the practice of intraoral/perioral piercing and tongue splitting.

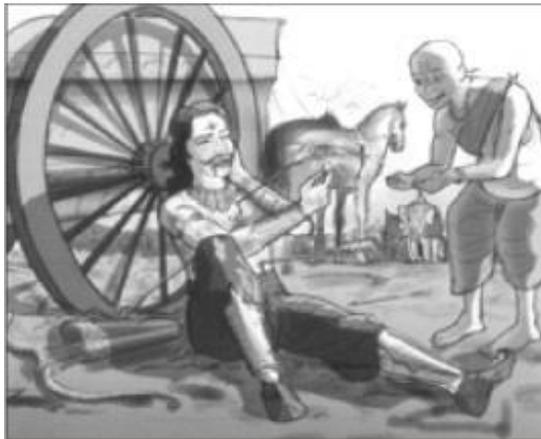
DENTAL TATTOOS



'Dental tattoos' are custom designs which are added to dental crowns before the crowns are sealed and set in the mouth. This term is also used for temporary decals and stains used to decorate the teeth. Dental tattoos can be applied to any tooth, and they have wide range of styles, colours, and designs. 14-35 year age group usually goes in for dental tattoo treatment. The popular categories for tattooing include celebrities, flowers, and religion, devotion to person or issue, and animals. Temporary tattoos are the designs in the form of templates that are stuck on the teeth. Sticking a temporary tattoo takes just 15-20 minutes. It started in the West about 8-10 years ago with hip hop singers and rappers started sporting them in their music videos. Modern dentistry gave rise to the idea of dental tattoos. Use of word tattoo to define ornamental designs on teeth is a bit of a misnomer, as a tattoo, by definition, is a pigment mark made by piercing the skin. In the case of dental tattoos, the teeth are not actually pierced or even touched with a needle, and the material which covers teeth is enamel, not skin. After a dentist takes impression of tooth makes a mold and confirms that it is correctly sized for the tooth, it is sent to a lab which specializes in such things, and a skilled artist typically does the tattoo work on the artificial crown, carefully paints miniature design onto the tooth crown then it is cemented on natural tooth. Patients generally do not have to take any special steps to maintain their dental tattoos, beyond caring for the crown itself. After long use dental tattoos can be removed by grinding away the upper layers of the crown, for people who are fed up with single design tattoo, but do not want to replace the entire crown. The entire procedure is painless except mild sensitivity. But sometimes chemicals used to add tattoos on teeth are not completely safe.

Dental tattoo sometimes abrade with time and needs to be replaced. If a person is lacking hygiene, then there could be cavities and plaque build-up, but this can happen even without a tattoo. So maintenance of good oral hygiene is must after having a tattoo in mouth.

TOOTH JEWELLERY



Dentistry as portrayed in the Epic of Mahabharata: Lord Krishna in Mahabharata wanted to test the benevolence of dying Karna in the battle field of Kurukshetra. Disguised as Brahmin, Krishna asks for gold in donation & Karna proves his worth by donating his gold filled tooth. This part of the epic indicates the existence of dentistry even around 2500 BC, wherein defective teeth were restored with gold [21].



Tooth Jewellery is much in demand these days in cosmetic dentistry. Most are making this style statement not only to surprise friends with a sparkling crystal glass design, or something in gold with a twinkle of ruby or diamond, but also add zing in life. These tiny little designs are great fun, and because there's no drilling involved, they don't harm teeth. They are bonded to teeth in the same way as orthodontic brackets. The jewellery is just cemented onto tooth. The procedure is very simple and usually takes about 10 to 15 minutes. They can be left in place for years if desired, but are removable, and do not damage the tooth; the design can be changed several times. Drilling, holes or tooth Preparation is not involved so there is no loss of tooth structure. It is temporary, so it can be removed any time patient desires. The stones are bonded to the labial surfaces of natural teeth without invasive preparation.

CONCLUSION

Newer advances and trends in dental procedures are making dentistry more interesting among patients as well as dentists. Now dentistry is not only limited to treating dental problems or diseases only but also is gaining considerable importance when matter comes on looking beautiful or stylish. Patients also prefer a dentist if he is expert in recent advances and if he suggests alternatives instead of traditional procedures. As an ethical dentist it is our duty to know and inform all pros and cons of each new trend.

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