Prevention, prevention and prevention

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Abstract
A recent study by Levy et al. presents the dental treatment needs of a large sample of combat soldiers. They found that 80% need some dental care.
It is unfortunate that so many, educated, otherwise healthy young adults are in need of dental care and it indicates that more prevention of dental disease is needed.
In last years, the Ministry of Health started two projects to prevent dental disease among the very young: In Mother and Child Health Centers and in kindergartens. In a couple of years, these projects will be widely implemented.
With the School Dental Service, these two projects will cover all ages from birth to 18.
In the future, with these programs implemented, soldiers should need less dental treatment.

Keywords: Dental health, Dental care, Prevention of dental disease, Dental treatment needs
Funded by the Ministry of Health, it will be universal in a few years.

In kindergartens, tooth brushing is done by the 3–4 year old children, supervised by the teachers [6]. Each school-year, more and more kindergartens join. The model was adapted to special education kindergartens too [7]. This project also is funded by the Ministry of Health, and it will be universal in a few years.

These two programs complement the School Dental Service, wholly funded by the Ministry of Health since 2010. It provides outreach preventive services to all children in the compulsory education, from preschool to 10th grade.

It is worth mentioning that preventive measures for children are free of co-payment in the basket of services of the National Health Insurance Law. Those services are provided to children that show up at the dental clinics, i.e. they are dependent on the parents’ awareness, hence not universal. For this reason, the outreach programs mentioned earlier that are universal and cater to all children regardless of parents’ awareness are an important addition to the national effort to prevent dental disease.

Conclusions

Only prevention in early childhood can see to it that young soldiers will be drafted with substantially less dental treatment needs. We expect that the effort invested in these national programs will be effective in achieving this result.

Abbreviations

MoH: Ministry of Health; RCT: Root Canal Treatment

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Authors’ information

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