

Abstract

Periodontal disease is any oral disease affecting the periodontium. Injury to it results in undesirable tooth loss. It is also one of the two most common causes of tooth mortality. It is a painless condition and it progresses undetected to cause tooth loss. It is postulated that patients with periodontal disease seek treatment only when informed by a dentist, thus it was found necessary to identify other factors influencing patients to seek periodontal treatment. Objectives: To determine the oral health care seeking behaviour of patients with periodontal disease. Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was carried out on new patients aged 18 years and above attending the Periodontology Clinic of the University of Nairobi Dental Hospital over a 1 week period. Results: 31 patients participated. 18(58.06%) were male, 13(41.94%) were female. Age range was 18 to 62 with a mean age of 24. The main reason for not seeking treatment for periodontal disease was that the disease did not bother them, according to 14(45.16%) of the respondents. 4(12.90%) was due to lack of money, 3(9.68%) waiting too long to be treated in the health facility they attended previously. Other reasons each had 1 respondent and contributed collectively 32.30%. Conclusion: Oral health education programmes to the community at large should be increased to enlighten patients on presentation of periodontal disease so that they may seek treatment earlier in order to avoid tooth loss.