This presentation will discuss the definition of nutrition as well as distinguish between evidence-based ideas and nutritional myths. The critical role of scientific evidence-based dietary and nutritional counseling for patients across the entire life span - starting with the pregnant mother and moving through infancy, early childhood, elementary and middle school years, adolescence, adulthood, and finally geriatric years - will be discussed. Well-balanced nutrition is critical in the prevention of most chronic diseases as well as in wound healing. The dental team, consisting of the dentist, dental hygienist, dental assistant, and including the front desk staff must all fully understand the critical role of diet and nutrition in oral and systemic health and engage in the process of dietary and nutritional counseling for all patients. It is imperative that scientific evidence be considered and widespread myths about nutrition and their effects be clearly understood by dental professionals.

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

1. Discuss a clear definition of nutrition
2. Clarify and distinguish between evidence-based ideas and nutritional myths
3. Understand the importance of involving the entire dental team in dietary and nutritional counseling for patients across the human lifespan
4. Describe dietary guidelines for all Americans
5. Discuss dietary counseling for patients with active caries, periodontal disease, and halitosis as well as overweight, obesity, T2 diabetes, hypertension, cardiovascular conditions, etc.
6. Describe dietary advice for patients on soft diets, mechanically pureed diets, and those undergoing oral surgery and denture fabrication

CLINICIAN

POONAM JAIN, BDS, MS, MPH, is the Vice Dean for Clinical Affairs and Advanced Dental Education at the Missouri School of Dentistry and Oral Health – A.T. Still University. She has an M.P.H. from St. Louis University and an M.S. and Certificate in Operative Dentistry from The University of Iowa. She graduated with a B.D.S. degree from the University of Delhi, New Delhi, India. In addition to her current administrative role as Vice Dean, Dr. Jain has extensive experience teaching and directing didactic, pre-clinical, and clinical courses for pre-doctoral students in operative dentistry, dental materials, dental morphology, cariology, community and preventive dentistry, special needs, and geriatric dentistry. She has engaged in numerous research projects and published several research articles as well as abstracts. Dr. Jain has been very active mentoring students in research as well. She also owns a successful private practice in Staunton, Illinois. Dr. Jain has been very active in numerous community service projects and has been the organizer for several Give Kids a Smile, National Children’s Dental Health Month as well as Special Olympics events. She is a fellow of the International as well as American College of Dentists and serves on the Board of the National CAMBRA Coalition.

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