Follow-up routines for occlusal appliances in public dental practice in Västerbotten, Sweden

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Abstract

**Background:** Occlusal appliances for treatment of different temporomandibular disorders (TMD) have shown to have good effect. Patients treated with an occlusal appliance should return for follow-ups and they have a right for free follow-ups within 3 months. Despite this, there are patients that are not receiving their follow-ups.

**Aim:** To evaluate follow-up routines after treatment with an occlusal appliance in public dental practice in Västerbotten, Sweden. To evaluate the most common indications for treatment with an occlusal appliance. To evaluate if the dentists register the outcome of the treatment with their occlusal appliance or not.

**Methods:** One hundred randomly selected dental records were analysed from patients treated with an occlusal appliance during 2019 in public dental practice in Västerbotten county. The analysis was conducted using a Microsoft Excel document that had prior to analysis been created. The results were processed using IBM SPSS Statistics and Microsoft Excel.

**Results:** Forty-eight of the 97 accessible patients had a scheduled follow-up. Out of these, 38 received their follow-ups. Seventy-three patients had bruxism as an indication for treatment, 40 had myalgia, 33 had tooth wear and 33 had replacement of an old appliance. Sixty-four out of 97 patients had no information about evaluation of treatment, 17 had improved symptoms.

**Conclusions:** The study showed an approximately 50% rate of scheduled follow-ups of occlusal appliances and the most common indication for that treatment was bruxism. The dentists did not evaluate the treatment outcome of patients’ symptoms. It is recommended to adhere to the decision-making model.