Policy on Intraoral and Perioral Piercing

Originating Council
Council on Clinical Affairs

Review Council
Council on Clinical Affairs

Adopted
2000

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2003

Purpose

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) recognizes the importance of educating the public and health professionals on the health implications of oral and perioral piercings.

Methods

This policy was based on a MEDLINE search using keywords "body piercing" and "oral piercing" and relevant articles from the dental and medical literature.

Background

The use of intraoral jewelry and piercings of oral and perioral tissues have been gaining popularity among adolescents and young adults. Oral piercings involving the tongue, lips, cheeks, and uvula have been associated with pathological conditions including pain, infection, scar formation, tooth fractures, metal hypersensitivity reactions, localized periodontal disease, speech impediment, and nerve damage.[1-11] Life-threatening complications associated with oral piercings have been reported, including bleeding, edema, and airway obstruction.[12-13] Unregulated piercing parlors and techniques have been identified by the National Institutes of Health as a possible vector for disease transmission (ie, hepatitis, tetanus, tuberculosis) and as a cause of bacterial endocarditis in susceptible patients.[1]

Policy statement

The AAPD strongly opposes the practice of piercing intraoral and perioral tissues and use of jewelry on intraoral and perioral tissues due to the potential for pathological conditions and sequelae associated with these practices.

References

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