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For many, the adolescent years can be a difficult emotional period and a time when dental and medical needs may be neglected. Oral health needs are critical factors in the maturation of the adolescent, whether they involve the relief of pain, improved nutrition, an increase in self-esteem with orthodontic treatment, or “just” saving the dentition from the ravages of the early stages of periodontal disease. This article reviews demographic characteristics of adolescents in the United States with regard to oral health status, use of dental services, barriers to dental care, and children who have special health needs.

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Among the many formative issues in adolescents, determinants for health behaviors are being shaped. The development of positive oral health behavior in adolescents is a complex process. Areas specifically related to oral health include self-concept and its relationship to oral health and compliance with orthodontic care; tobacco use; special considerations including anorexia, bulimia, and troubled youths; and health promotions. Knowledge is necessary, but there must also be shifts in attitudes and the development of health-related behaviors. Establishing these attitudes and behaviors in adolescence is crucial, because patterns of behavior developed in adolescence can form the basis for future health.

Prevention Strategies for Dental Caries in the Adolescent 33
Angelina E. Riccelli and Linda S. Kelly

The adolescent period presents a challenge for the dental health care professional—dentally, behaviorally, and developmentally. Changes in the frequency, distribution, and rate of progression for dental caries demand a re-evaluation of the treatment paradigm. The purpose of this article is to suggest dental caries preventive strategies for the adolescent dental patient.

Periodontal and Soft Tissue Prevention Strategies for the Adolescent Dental Patient 51
Deborah Studen-Pavlovich and Dennis N. Ranalli

Recent research has refocused attention on the contribution of periodontal health to the general health of patients at various ages. This article describes changes in the periodontal tissues of adolescent dental patients related to hormonal fluctuations, lack of proper oral hygiene, and risk-taking behaviors. Attention is placed on the development and prevention of acute and chronic gingival conditions in addition to gingival tissue enlargement as one side effect of certain medications.

Developmental Occlusion, Orthodontic Interventions, and Orthognathic Surgery for Adolescents 69
Daniel J. Rinchuse and Donald J. Rinchuse

This article addresses issues in orthodontics such as timing of treatment, expansion in the absence of a posterior crossbite, serial extractions, treatment of Class II and III malocclusions, treatment of open bites, extraction versus nonextraction, preservation of E-space to resolve crowding, orthodontics and temporomandibular disorders, orthognathic surgery, and current trends in orthodontics. Although much information is presented on these topics, many controversies still exist. When more data from evidence-based systematic reviews become available, more predictable and standardized orthodontic treatments may develop.

Conservative Aesthetic Solutions for the Adolescent and Young Adult Utilizing Composite Resins 87
Douglas L. Lambert

The demand for aesthetic procedures in today's dental arena is increasing exponentially, yet these desires often call for conservative restorative options, especially for the adolescent patient. The use of direct composite resin restorations offers the dentist the most simple and cost-effective manner in which to create an aesthetic change in the anterior portion of the mouth. The combination of improved materials and innovative delivery techniques allows clinicians to reach these aesthetic goals by creating conservative and functional restorations that have excellent longevity. This article

demonstrates five direct composite approaches for solving aesthetic dilemmas in the adolescent and young adult patient.

Oral Health Issues for Adolescent Athletes

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Dennis N. Ranalli and Danielle L. Elderkin

Adolescent athletes are faced with a myriad of influences that can affect their oral health. During these formative years, the choices adolescents make regarding health could have repercussions throughout their lives. Health professionals can play an important role in educating their patients to make wise decisions. By becoming more aware of the health risks to which athletes are exposed, health professionals can learn to recognize these unhealthy behaviors and recommend appropriate prevention and cessation strategies to their patients who participate in sports.

Common Medications Prescribed for Adolescent Dental Patients

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Paul A. Moore and Elliot V. Hersh

Common prescription medications taken by adolescent patients include various psychopharmacologic agents (to manage depression, obsessive-compulsive disorders, and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorders), pulmonary drugs (to prevent and treat asthma), and dermatologic agents (to treat acne). Other agents encountered when treating adolescent patients are antidiabetes agents, antibiotics, and birth control medications. This overview identifies prescription medications commonly used by adolescent patients and discusses their possible impact on dental care.

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