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Nursing habits and early childhood caries in children attending Hospital University Science Malaysia (HUSM)

Abstract

The habit of nocturnal bottle or breast-feeding has been reported to be a potential cause for early childhood caries (ECC) in very young children. The aim of this study was to determine the prevalence of ECC in children 2-5 years of age attending out patient clinic HUSM, in relation to the nursing habits. In this cross-sectional study, 90 children were randomly selected to examine their caries status using torch and disposable mirror. Data on mothersâ€™ educational level, nursing habits and oral hygiene practices, were gather by using structured questionnaire. It has been found that 16.7% of subjects were caries free while 83.3% of them had caries with mean dmf score 6 (SD 5.3). With regard to nursing habits, 29% of subjects had breast-feeding alone, 16% had bottle-feeding alone and 55% had both breast and bottle-feeding. Ninety-three percent of children had been nursed beyond 14 months and 47% had been fed with liquids other than breast milk, infant formula or water. Twenty-seven percent of children were allowed to sleep with nursing bottle in mouth and 52% were allowed to sleep with breast nipple in the mouth which shows significantly associated with ECC (p = 0.03). Tooth brushing habit was reported for 91% of children using toothpaste. Mean age of the children (in months) when the mothers started brushing the teeth was 19.1 (SD 10.8) and has significant association with ECC (p

Keyword : early, childhood, caries, nursing, habits, nursing, bottle,


