



area<sup>11</sup>. Studies have reported that approximately 80 percent of traumatic dental injuries occur to the maxillary incisors<sup>12,13</sup>. Kvittum showed the high incidence of dental injuries in the Olympic sports of soccer, wrestling, and basketball<sup>14</sup>. In one study conducted in the Netherlands, it was observed that in addition to dental injuries, there was a high incidence of facial fractures, and any Olympic program should also be prepared to deal with this serious injury<sup>15</sup>. McNutt recorded 69 oral injuries in baseball and basketball, 67 of which occurred in athletes not wearing mouthguards<sup>16</sup>. Despite the high incidence of dental injuries, there is still resistance from athletes to use mouth protection. It was noted that approximately one-third of all dental trauma resulted from sporting injuries, but in only 1 in 20 occurrences was a mouthguard worn. While 1 in 5 field hockey players sustained at least one serious dental injury during their careers, only 20 percent of international players chose to wear a mouthguard. The main deterrent was education about the potential benefits<sup>3</sup>.

### Recommendations To Prevent Dental Problems

#### For sports committees

- There should be the socialized dentistry in all the countries.
- Education on the importance of good dental health should be emphasized.
- Oral health assessment should be part of every athlete's routine medical care and completion of necessary dental treatment prior to the games should be encouraged.
- Oral hygiene education and materials should be available within the sports village or stadium, possibly with the assistance of corporate sponsors.
- Education initiatives should be undertaken provide athletes with information on the relation of oral health to performance and the benefits of proper mouth protection and other relevant topics.

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- Sportspersons should be educated on the potential harmful effects of the sports beverages and techniques for minimizing this damage.
- Dental fitness requirements should be insisted upon for the contestants from all countries.
- Regulations should be introduced by the sports committees requiring the compulsory use of mouth guards and other protective gears to prevent orofacial injuries.

#### For Sportspersons

- Proper home care like Brushing well and flossing regularly.
- Use of appropriate Fluoridated tooth pastes.
- Use of xylitol-containing products such as chewing gum between workouts and meals as it increases salivary output, relieves dryness and generates remineralization.
- Athletes should carry a bottle of water while racing and working out to rinse the mouth after consumption of gels, drinks and bars.
- Fluoridated rinses and professionally applied fluoride treatments by dentist or hygienist.
- Pit and fissure sealants application by dentists.
- Oral prophylaxis by dentist or hygienist.
- Regular dental checkups.

#### Conclusion

The dental health of sportspersons is often poorer and may result in emergency problems that can compromise their performance. The possibility of a sportsperson losing years of training due to an avoidable dental illness or injury is unacceptable, and steps must be taken to prevent these occurrences. Further assessment of this problem must take place, and a system to help educate and deliver a better level of care to the athletes, through their sports committees must be developed, a partnership with global and local bodies, might help with this initiative.

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