

TITLE: The Medical Management of Tooth Decay: A Paradigm Shift

AUTHOR(S): Steve Duffin DDS; Kurt Ferre DDS

PRESENTER(S): Steve Duffin DDS; Kurt Ferre DDS

STUDENT SUBMISSION: No

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: Public health administrators, policy makers, budget directors, and medical/dental care personnel

ABSTRACT: Traditional dental education has focused on the surgical intervention for tooth decay through the removal of infected tooth structure and the placement of restorations. Recently, a resurgence of interest in approaching tooth decay using minimally invasive treatments with medicine has gained popularity. Interestingly, in 1908 this method was described by the father of modern dentistry, Dr. G.V. Black. His product of choice was silver nitrate. This product was widely used by the dental profession up until the 1950's when it fell out of favor. In 1965 a pediatric dentist working on her PhD in Japan invented a combination product, silver fluoride. This product has been widely used throughout the world, but only recently gained approval by the FDA for marketing in the US. Breaking out of the "dental silo", dental public health leaders have put forth the concept that treating oral disease and filling teeth is not necessarily the same thing. A large body of scientific literature is building in support of the use of this product especially for children, seniors and people with disabilities.

In this presentation we will review the history, science and current status of use of 2 silver-containing products in Oregon, the USA, and internationally.

OBJECTIVE(S): 1) Demonstrates how the Medical Management of Tooth Decay aligns with the Triple Aim: the simultaneous pursuit of improving the patient experience of care, improving the health of populations, and reducing the per capita cost of health care.

2) Explains how the Medical Management of Tooth Decay can be performed outside of the traditional dental office setting by medical/dental personnel in various public health settings.