

Editorial

A Holistic Approach of Using Natural Ingredients in Oral Health Care: The Future Looks Green

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Natural and holistic approaches to health care, including dentistry, have gained popularity in recent years. Concerns about the chemicals in traditional dental treatments have led many people to switch to natural components for oral care. Traditional dental care products, such as mouthwash, toothpaste, and treatments, frequently include artificial sweeteners and synthetic chemicals like triclosan. Although these components are useful for maintaining dental health, using them in excess can increase the risk of toxicity, allergies, and hormonal imbalances.

Resultantly, a lot of people look for natural substitutes that offer comparable advantages without negative side effects. For ages, people from many cultures have used natural ingredients for maintaining good oral hygiene. Among the numerous benefits of using natural compounds in dentistry are their antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, and remineralizing qualities. They help fight against oral problems while preserving the oral microbiome's equilibrium, which is critical for long-term dental health.

The efficacy of several natural substances in dental care has been well established. For millennia, neem has been utilized in Indian traditional medicine. It works well against gum disease, foul breath, and plaque formation because of its antibacterial and antifungal qualities. Neem extracts are a common ingredient in herbal toothpastes and mouthwashes because of their capacity to eliminate harmful bacteria while maintaining healthy oral flora. Clove, another component, is widely known for its antibacterial and analgesic qualities. Clove oil contains a chemical called eugenol, which has been used in dentistry to relieve pain and as an antiseptic during root canal procedures.

Recent studies have proven the efficacy of aloe vera for its soothing and healing properties. In dentistry, it is used to treat gum diseases, mouth ulcers, and inflammation. Aloe vera gel can be applied directly to the gums to reduce irritation and promote faster healing. Also, turmeric, which contains curcumin, has anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial effects. It is

used in homemade toothpaste and mouthwashes to reduce gum swelling, fight infections, and whiten teeth naturally.

Oils such as tea tree oil and coconut oil have shown some excellent results in oral health care. While the former has strong antibacterial and antifungal properties and helps fight plaque, gingivitis, and bad breath, the latter is commonly used for oil pulling, an ancient practice that involves swishing oil in the mouth to remove toxins and bacteria. It has antimicrobial properties that help prevent cavities, gum diseases, and bad breath. Essential oils from peppermint and spearmint provide a refreshing taste while also offering antibacterial properties. They are used in mouthwashes and toothpastes to combat bad breath and bacterial growth.

Miswak, another wonder molecule, has been used for oral hygiene for centuries in the Middle East and Africa. It contains natural antibacterial properties and helps prevent plaque formation and bad breath. Also, licorice, a plant root, has antimicrobial properties that help reduce bacteria responsible for cavities and gum diseases. Natural ingredients such as amla, ashwagandha, cinnamon bark, nutmeg, arnica, Vajradanti, Akarkara, etc. have also shown potent efficacy in providing good oral health care in one way or the other.

All these natural ingredients are increasingly being incorporated into modern dentistry, both in personal oral care products and professional treatments such as in natural toothpaste and mouthwashes, gum paints, natural teeth whitening products, pain relief medications for local application, endodontic irrigation and medicaments, etc.

Numerous studies have highlighted the effectiveness of these natural ingredients in oral care and many clinical trials are in progress across the globe to validate the same. However, one must understand the challenges that need due consideration in this context. One of the biggest challenges is

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the lack of standardization, wherein, unlike synthetic drugs, the potency of natural ingredients can vary depending on their source and preparation methods.

Globally, the use of natural ingredients in dentistry is gaining popularity as people seek safer, holistic approaches to oral care. However, it is worth a mention that while

natural remedies offer numerous benefits, they should be used in conjunction with professional dental care to ensure optimal results. As scientific research continues to validate these natural solutions, we can expect to see more widespread integration of holistic dentistry in mainstream oral health care practices.