

## Behavioral Management in Dental Medicine -lecture presentation

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Dentistry has an environment which can stimulate the natural fear responses even in adults. This is even more extensive in children because of lack of maturity, intellectual capacity, and communication deficits. Various studies reported the prevalence of dental fear and anxiety in children to be as high as 30%–40%.

Children often try all means to avoid dental treatment resulting in failed or missed appointments. They are difficult to treat leading to prolonged appointment durations. Their uncooperative nature also creates occupational stress on dentist. All these results in neglected dental care.

Delay in seeking treatment leaves conservative treatment options unviable. They may require more complex treatment with the aid of pharmacological interventions. Psychological behavior management techniques are meant to reduce need for excessive and potentially unsafe use of medications. Moreover, behavior management technique should focus on decreasing fear and anxiety toward a dental procedure and on increasing children's coping abilities. The use of pharmacological techniques does not fulfill these purposes. This highlights the need for using psychological behavior management techniques over pharmacological ones.

This lecture is planned to discuss in detail, the plethora of psychological behavior management techniques and emphasizing the one which is the most effective in reducing dental fear and anxiety.