Oral Health Tips for Patients on Sublingual Buprenorphine and Naloxone

Finding a Dentist

- Safety net clinics/FQHCs
- Dental schools
    - UNE in Portland
    - Tufts, BU, Harvard in Boston
- Dental residency programs in northern New England
    - Togus VA Medical Center GPR
        - Augusta, ME
    - Tufts AEGD
        - Community Dental in Portland, Biddeford, and Lewiston
    - Harvard AEGD Rural Track in New Hampshire
        - Dental Health Works in Keene
        - Mid-State Health Center in Bristol
        - Greater Seacoast Community Health in Somersworth
        - Coos County Family Health Services (CCFHS) in Berlin
        - Harbor Care Health and Wellness Center in Nashua
    - University of Vermont GPR
        - South Burlington
- State dental societies
- Make friends with providers in your area

Screening for Oral Health Problems

- "How has your mouth been feeling?"
- Helpful rule of thumb
    - Sensitivity to sweets → cavity
    - Sensitivity to hot, cold, or pressure → infection of pulp
        - Spontaneous pain
        - Pain that lasts a long time
        - Pain that radiates
        - Swelling
    - Sensitivity only when brushing → gum or soft tissue problem
        - Bleeding
- "When was your last dental visit/dental cleaning?"
- "Do you feel like you have dry mouth?"
    - "Do you notice your cheeks and lips sticking to your teeth?"
    - "Do you feel like you have cotton mouth?"
    - "Do you feel like your teeth are fuzzy?"
        - "Do you keep water on the nightstand or wake up thirsty?"

Prescription-Strength Oral Health Aids

1.1% Sodium fluoride cream

Disp: 2 oz

Sig: Apply thin ribbon to toothbrush; brush thoroughly qhs for 2 minutes. Expectorate after brushing. Do not eat, drink, or rinse mouth for 30 minutes.

Refills: 3

Indications: Cavity prevention

Chlorhexidine gluconate oral rinse 0.12%

Disp: 3 x 16 oz (473 mL)

Sig: Floss and brush teeth 2 times per day, completely rinse toothpaste from mouth and swish 15mL (one capful) undiluted oral rinse in mouth for 30 seconds, then expectorate. Do not swallow. Do not eat for 2-3 hours after treatment.

Indication: Antimicrobial oral rinse

Available in alcohol-free formulation

Over-the-Counter Oral Health Aids

- Plaque disclosing tablets/mouth rinse
- Dental aids for dry mouth
    - Sore mouth rinse, sprays
    - Xylitol lozenges, chewing gums
- If OTC aids don't work, it is possible to switch to presecription strength medications
    - Salivary stimulating medications
    - "Magic mouth rinse" for sores (equal parts viscous lidocaine, diphenhydramine, and antacid)

Oral Health Actions

- Rinse with water and drink lots of water
    - Bottled vs. tap vs. well
    - Fluoridated vs. non-fluoridated
    - Salt water rinse
    - Baking soda rinse
- Don't brush right after taking medication
    - Brushing prevents remineralization
    - 30 minute window for the mouth to return to neutral after the insult of food or medication
- Actions taken on your own or with the help of a professional
    - Establishing good oral hygiene habits
    - Establishing dietary habits that reduce caries risk
    - Tobacco/vaping cessation