

Identifying Meth Patients in Your Practice



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Presentation Overview

- Brief background “meth” profile
- Dental Considerations
- Final Thoughts

Typical User

Truck drivers
People fatigued
Dieters
White collar workers
Athlete prior to games
Thrill seekers
Students study session
Increases sexuality

Lure of Meth

“Rush” like never before
Dopamine release → pleasure
Followed by euphoria
Acutely alert & perky
Feeling invincible, Strength & energy, Confidence
Intensified sexual desire/ satisfaction
90% become repeat user's

Effects on the

Mind

Anxiousness **
False sense of
confidence & power
Moodiness & irritability
Nervousness
Panic
Severe depression

&

Body

Heightens libido & risky
sexual behavior
Disorganized lifestyle
Skin loses luster &
elasticity (Ages quickly)
Decreased resistance to
illnesses
Heart rate increased
Increase in body temp →
possible brain damage
Liver damage, Convulsions,
Stroke, & Death

Signs

Short – Term Effects

- ~ Acne, sores (formication)
- ~ Convulsions
- ~ Dry, itchy skin
- ~ Hallucinations
- ~ Insomnia
- ~ Increased heart rate
- ~ Intense high
- ~ Loss of appetite
- ~ Weight loss
- ~ Loss of teeth
- ~ Paranoia
- ~ Violent behavior

Long- term Effects

- ~ Brain damage
- ~ Hallucinations
- ~ Heart Attack/Stroke
- ~ Liver, Kidney, & Lung Disorders
- ~ Lowered resistance to illnesses
- ~ Malnutrition
- ~ Permanent psychological problems
- ~ Poor coping abilities

Visible Signs--

- **Aggression**
- **Dilated pupils**
- **Hallucinations**
- **Long periods of sleeplessness**
- **Unnecessary movements**
- **Unpleasant, strong chemical body odor**
- **Seizures /convulsions**
- **Increased body temperature (sweating)**
- **Impaired / rapid speech**
- **Excessive talking / babbling**

Dental Meth Concerns ~

- What

draw's

your

attention?

Problems Associated with Meth Ingredients

Corrosive ingredients → cause skin burns:

~ Lithium

~ Muriatic & sulfuric acid

~ Ether

~ Red phosphorus & lye

3 Method's of Use:

1) **Smoking** = Heated → Vaporized & swirl in mouth =
Irritate & burn oral tissue's, sores, & infection;

Causes: Vapors on tooth enamel

2) **Snorting** = Caustic substances in nasal passages
→ drainage back of throat & teeth with corrosives

Causes: Chemical damage to teeth

3) **Injecting** = No direct impact on oral health

Dental Caries:

- Location: Facial gumlines
Root surfaces
Maxillary anterior interproximals
- Patient claims **tooth rots from inside out**
WHY ?? Reduction of blood supply;
Shortage of vessels
Less Nutrition
- Spreads quickly → May need extraction
- Costly repairs

Smoker's or Snorter's display

most oral effects ;

Typical "Meth Mouth" Decay



Lesions:

Smoker's present with lesions / burns on lips, gingiva, oral mucosa or hard palate

Snorter's –burns back of throat

** (Decreased ability to fight infections & heal)

Erosion:

Caused by chemical residues from smoking-- *Questionable*

Staining:

Decalcification & Blackened discoloration at gingiva

Bruxism:

Grinding

Worn abraded surfaces

Roots only remain

Cause:

Anxiety & hyperactivity

Trisma:

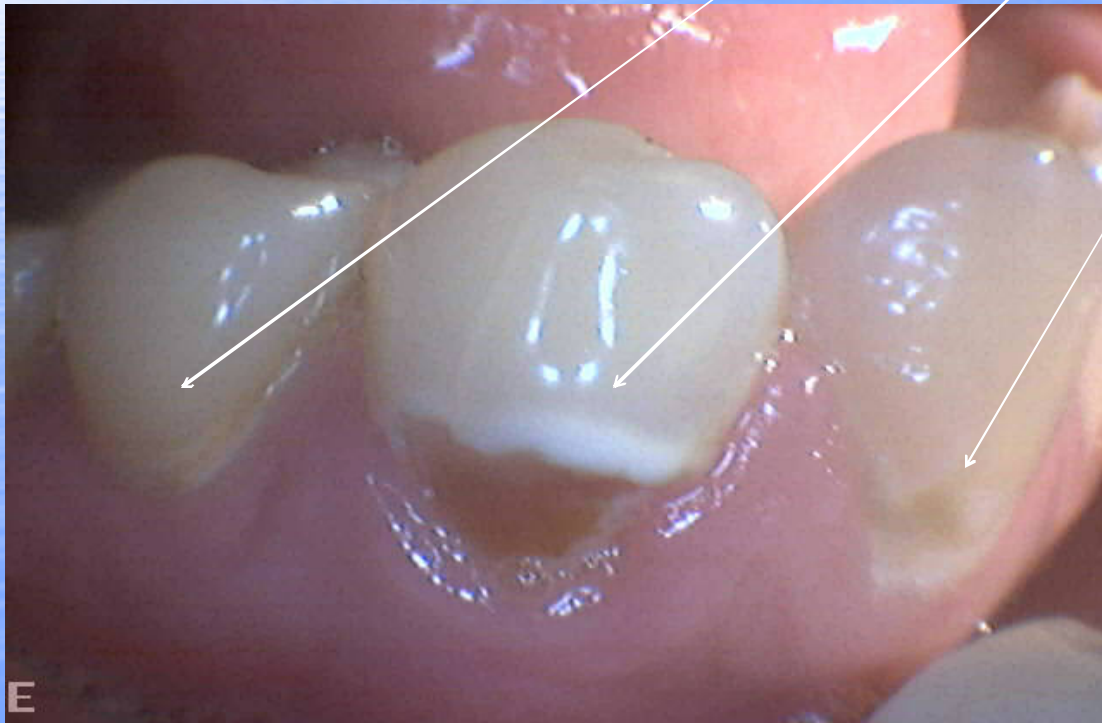
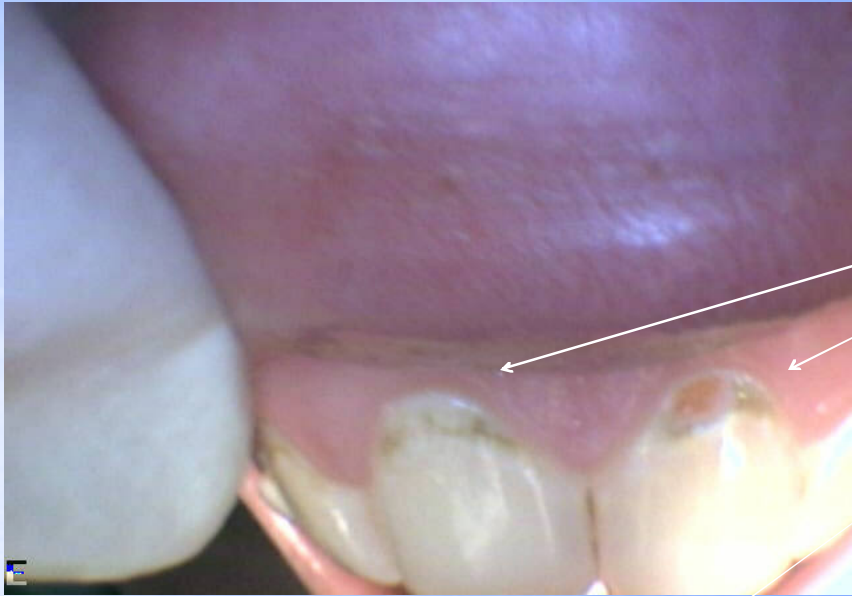
Cause:

Anxiety,
Nervousness,
Paranoia





Anteriors



Fractured Teeth:

- Users are more anxious & nervous

Cause:

- Constant clenching/grinding
- Develop cracks → fracture
- Severe attrition
- Unnatural wear patterns

TMJ:

- Malocclusion
- Missing teeth
- Pain

Cause:

- Association due to lack of tooth structures



Anesthesia Considerations

- **Interaction of drugs & anesthetics with epinephrine**
Cause: Possible Hypertensive episode
Heart arrhythmia
Medical emergency
- **Pain Blockage due to meth**
- **Caution for writing prescriptions**

Observable "Trigger" Signs for User

- **Unaccounted for & accelerated decay** (especially teenagers & young adults)
- **Decay pattern** (interproximal anterior teeth & buccal surfaces)
- **Malnourished appearance** (heavy users)
- **Root tips for posterior teeth**

...if suspect meth user:

- **Discuss findings & Educate**
- **If receptive → refer for physician, clinic, or abuse center**
- **Use preventive measures (fluoride/varnishes)**
- **Recommend: WATER not sugar carbonated sodas**
- **Cautious with anesthesia, sedatives, general anesthesia, nitrous oxide, & narcotics**

Remember!!!

- If a patient is under 18 years of age,
- You are a mandatory reporter
- Contact:
 - State's Attorney for county
 - Department of Social Services (DSS)
 - Law enforcement officers

Tweaker's in the Office

- **Regular meth user's**
- **Behave or react violently**
- **Might NOT slept 3 - 15 days, irritable & paranoid**
- **If also using alcohol or other drugs = danger intensified**
- **Unpredictable behavior**
- **First appear normal – But**
 - Eye movements 10 x's faster,**
 - Voice slight quiver**
 - Jerky movements**

Safety Tips with Tweaker's

- 1. Keep distance.** (If too close, perceived as threatening)
- 2. No bright lights.** (Paranoid & lights could lead to reacting violently)
- 3. Slow your speech, lower your voice.**
- 4. Slow movements.** (Paranoid & misunderstand)
- 5. Hands be visible.** (Feel threatened & become violent)
- 6. Keep Tweaker talking.** (If silent, may be dangerous. Paranoid thoughts possibly occurring to become delusional)

Results of Meth Mouth

Loss of self-esteem

Facial structure loss

Nutrition / Speech / Healing

Decalcification

Gingivitis / Perio

Bruxism

TMJ

Decayed teeth

Root tips

Trisma

Edentulous

High Cost for Repairs

(Fillings, Crowns, Bridges, Implants, Dentures)

Thank you.

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