

# Treating the Geriatric Patient

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# Speaker

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**APPLE TREE DENTAL**

Access • Compassion • Excellence

# Objectives

- Discuss the difference between comprehensive and palliative treatment plans
- Discuss behavior management techniques regarding patients suffering from dementia
- Review phased treatment planning and how it relates to palliative/comfort care
- Define SMART technique
- Briefly review denture tips and tricks



**Meet Karen**

# Fun facts

- On average, a 65 year old can expect to live another 19 years depending on comorbidities.
- Current estimations: 4.5% adults live in nursing homes and 2% in assisted living
- 1 in 3 elderly patients take 8+ medications
- 19% of elderly patients have no remaining teeth
- Geriatric patients typically have changes in diet, removing crunchy foods and moving to softer/pureed diets



# Treatment vs Palliative care



- Main questions you need to ask:
  - Is the patient in pain?
  - Are there complications with eating due to dental concern?
  - Is there infection present?
- Longevity vs. Temporary fixes
  - Smoothing sharp teeth vs filling vs extractions
  - Ageism: only choosing the temporary fixes and ignoring longevity

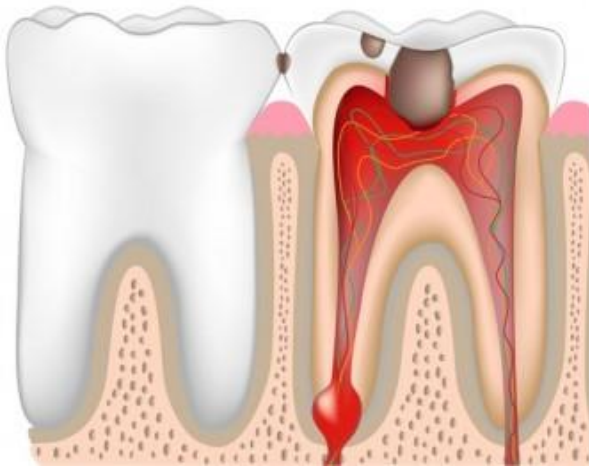
D9110: Palliative (emergency) treatment of dental pain; patient requires immediate relief from dental discomfort without addressing the underlying cause

# Behavior management

- D9920: Behavior management techniques utilized in dentistry to accommodate patients who may have difficulty cooperating or exhibit anxious behaviors during procedures
- Dementia
  - Can become combative
  - Extra DA assistance to hold hands to prevent patient from grabbing at instruments.
  - Distract and positive reinforcement
  - Be quick whenever possible



# Phased treatment planning



**#1 REMOVE INFECTION/NON  
RESTORABLE TEETH**



**#2 EVALUATE CARIES  
REQUIRING RESTORATIONS**



**#3 REPLACEMENT OPTIONS**

# Extraction vs. Monitor

- Remove it: infection, pain, high chance of aspiration
- Wait: Root canal treated, no symptoms, minimal chance of infection



**\*\*Patient/Guardian aware future extraction may be necessary\*\***

# SDF and SMART Fills

- Continued use of silver can help to decrease the amount of gingival bacteria over time
- New SDF gel – super helpful on root surfaces because it is less runny than typical SDF and stays exactly where you put it
- Silver Modified Atraumatic Restorative Technique
  - Prep tooth – remove as much decay as possible
  - Place SDF for 1 minute
  - Place glass ionomer filling over SDF





**Karen**

# Denture Tips

- Chairside relines vs lab relines

- Longevity
- Soft reline on MN denture for little to no alveolar ridge remaining



- Adhesive

- Powder vs paste vs combination



Questions?



# THANK YOU

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