

TOPIC: An update on early childhood caries and its prevention and management

Abstract: Good oral practices in early life set the foundation for a lifetime of optimal oral health. Unfortunately, early childhood caries (ECC) is far too common among some Canadian children. Many develop severe forms of ECC requiring dental surgery under general anesthesia. Despite advancements in preventive dentistry, strategies that are somewhat effective in lower risk populations are often not as effective in others. This session will include an update on the prevalence and risk factors for ECC, what we can learn from studying rates of dental surgery to treat severe ECC under general anesthesia, and the impact ECC can have on childhood nutritional health and well-being. The session will also discuss the importance of caries risk assessment, promising products for prevention and management of ECC, including silver diamine fluoride, and the need for prevention and early childhood oral health promotion.

Learning Objectives:

Objective 1: Review current data on the burden of and early life risk factors for ECC and dental surgery for treating severe ECC under general anesthesia in Canada.

Objective 2: Discuss the impact that severe ECC can have on nutritional status and well-being.

Objective 3: Provide an update on caries risk assessment and the development of a Canadian pediatric caries risk assessment tool for preschool children.

Objective 4: Share research experiences and effectiveness of primary and secondary prevention of dental caries in preschool children, including silver diamine fluoride.

Objective 5: Provide an update on the Healthy Smile Happy Child initiative and practical resources for promoting early childhood oral health in Manitoba.

Bio: