

GRAND ROUNDS

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Early Childhood Caries—Cross Cultural Perspectives

ABSTRACT

Dental caries (decay) is an international public health challenge, especially amongst young children. Early Childhood Caries is a rapidly progressing disease in the primary dentition of children leading to severe pain, anxiety, sepsis and sleep loss, and is a major health problem particularly in disadvantaged populations. This presentation will address the following issues:

- Early Childhood Caries characteristics in a global context
- Why has early childhood caries become such a menace?
- Is early childhood caries different from other dental caries?
- What is done to combat early childhood caries?
- The challenge of engaging parents and health providers?

The strong impact of social determinants in the development of dental diseases seems to influence early childhood caries disproportionately. In the USA, this is further exacerbated by low oral health literacy and lack of access to oral health care in those groups in the population most affected by the disease. Although we know how to prevent the disease the lack of consequential funding and fragmentation of care make it difficult to achieve a lasting health impact.

Food and beverages will be provided.