

Quick Tips for the Dental Office



Emergency Supplies

Medical emergencies can, and do, happen in the dental office. These emergencies may be related directly to dental therapy, or they may occur by chance in the office. Regardless, dental offices need to be prepared to provide basic life support, and seek emergency medical services quickly. Dentists need to be able to diagnose and treat common problems, but also effectively respond to less common, life-threatening situations.

The State Board of Dentistry regulates the emergency medical equipment that must be kept by anesthesia permit holders, however, there are no regulations on basic emergency supplies that should be maintained by all dental offices. Many medical emergencies may be able to be treated without the use of drugs, but every dental office should have a basic emergency kit that contains drugs and equipment appropriate to the training of the dentist and type of patients being treated.

The American Dental Association offers the following recommendations on basic emergency supplies that should be maintained in the dental office.



Basic Emergency Equipment

- *Portable oxygen cylinder* (E size) with regulator
- *Supplemental oxygen* delivery devices including nasal cannula, nonbreathing mask with oxygen reservoir and nasal hood
- *Bag-valve-mask device* with oxygen reservoir
- *Oropharyngeal airways* (adult sizes 7, 8 9 cm)
- *Magill forceps*
- Automated external defibrillator (AED) **
- *Stethoscope*
- *Sphygmomanometer* with adult small, medium and large cuff sizes
- *Wall clock* with second hand

Basic Emergency Medications

- *Oxygen*
- *Epinephrine*: Used to treat anaphylaxis resulting from severe allergic reactions or acute asthmatic attacks. A back-up injection should also be on hand in case the patient has a biphasic reaction.
- *Diphenhydramine* (Histamine blockers): Used to treat patients with mild or delayed onset allergic reactions
- *Nitroglycerin*: Used to relieve severe angina symptoms such as chest pain or pressure.
- *Bronchodilator*: Used to treat acute bronchospasm that may be experienced during an asthmatic attack or anaphylaxis
- *Glucose*: Simple sugar used to treat diabetic or hypoglycemic patients during a blood sugar related emergency.
- *Aspirin*: Administered as part of the MONA protocol when myocardial infarction is suspected.
- *Aromatic ammonia*: Used as a stimulant to improve the consciousness of patients who have fainted.
- *Naloxone*: Used to rapidly reverse opioid overdose

Emergency Supplies, Cont'd

In addition, oxygen tanks and delivery systems should be checked on a regular basis to ensure they are in good working order. Emergency medications should be checked monthly, and restocked upon expiration or immediately after their use; and a listing of emergency telephones should be kept in a prominent location near each telephone.

For more information about medical emergencies in the dental office, please visit the ADA website at: <https://www.ada.org/en/member-center/oral-health-topics/medical-emergencies-in-the-dental-office>.

**Please note that the SBOD is currently drafting regulations requiring all dental offices to have AEDs. These regulations are not in effect at present, but most likely will be in the near future