

Fitness 101 for Dental Hygienists: Secrets for Comfort and Career Longevity

Utah Dental Association
January 25, 2025
Salt Lake City, UT



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Contributing Risk Factors in Dentistry

5 Steps to Practicing Dentistry Pain-Free

1. Dental Ergonomics
2. **Stress Management**
3. **Myofascial Self-Treatment**
4. **Chairside Stretching**
5. **Muscular Endurance Training**

#2 STRESS MANAGEMENT

Risk Factors

Time management	Technical perfection
Anxious/uncooperative patients	Malfunctioning equipment
Team member controls	Heavy workload

4 Key Stress Management Strategies

- 1st Strategy: Breathing Exercise to correct dysfunctional breathing in the operatory that can cause neck pain, low back pain and SI pain.

#3 MYOFASCIAL SELF-TREATMENT

ACUTE PAIN

- Pain at rest – usually severe “7-8” range
- Swelling or heat in the area
- Sudden onset, usually lasts 3-5 days
- Restricted movement
- Early treatment EXTREMELY important during this phase

“SCRIPT”

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RED FLAG SYMPTOMS

When pain may NOT be musculoskeletal in origin. Call your doctor immediately!

- If your symptoms increase with rest and during the night.
- If you cannot reproduce the pain with body movement or positioning.
- If the symptoms cover a large, non-specific area and are hard to pin-point.
- If symptoms migrate from one joint to another.
- Numbness and/or muscle weakness that does not subside.
- Dizziness, nausea, blurred vision, severe headache, loss of balance, or fever.

CHRONIC PAIN

- Most common type among dental professionals
- Moderate pain “3-6” on pain scale
- Pain usually localized, and felt “on & off”
- Often the result of years of awkward, repetitive posturing
- Takes longer to recover from, requires change of habits

A Backnobber tool and small hard ball are effective for treating most trigger points.

- Find the trigger point
- Apply deep pressure for 5 slow counts, then massage slowly across the point for 5 counts
- Alternate between deep pressure and slow massage for *one minute* per trigger point
- Aim at a pain level that “Hurts so good” (about 4-5 on a scale of 1-10)
- Perform a 30-60 second stretch to the affected area.
- Repeat 3-5 times/day if possible

#4 CHAIRSIDE STRETCHING

How to Stretch Safely

- Move into and out of a stretch *slowly*.
- Breathe in and exhale slowly as you increase the stretch to a point of mild tension or discomfort.
- Hold stretch for 2-4 breathing cycles.
- Try stretch toward both sides to determine tightest side. Stretch toward the tightest side during the workday. Perform stretches in both directions at home and on weekends.
- Do NOT stretch in a painful range. Discontinue stretching if pain increases following stretching.

#5 MUSCULAR ENDURANCE TRAINING

Endurance training

- Good for targeting the postural muscles.
- Essential for preventing injuries and for maintaining optimal postures in prolonged, static postures.
- Focuses on high repetitions and low weight.

Power training

- Tends to target the more superficial mover muscles which are designed for power.
- Training focuses more on low repetitions and high weight.

MUSCULAR ENDURANCE TRAINING:

- Postural stabilization muscles
- Scapular stabilizing musculature
- Specific rotator cuff muscles

- *Never perform strengthening exercises if you have pain.*
- Strengthening should be done 3 times weekly.
- Always start out mildly and increase gradually.
- Exercise should not cause pain. If you experience pain, stop the exercise.
- Pilates, Crossfit, P90X and other generic programs MUST be modified for dental professionals.

RESOURCES

Dr. Valachi's Online CE Video Training Courses: www.posturedontics.com

MediBeads moist heat wraps - www.amazon.com

Trigger Point Therapy Workbook by Davies – www.amazon.com

Backnobber Trigger Point Tool - www.amazon.com

LECTURE SUPPLEMENT

YES! I would like to receive Dr. Valachi's lecture supplement!

Text 55444 and type in WELLNESS.

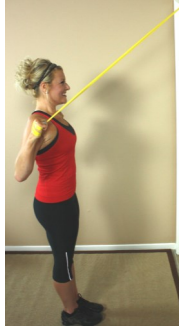
About the Speaker



Dr. Bethany Valachi, PT, DPT, MS, CEAS is a physical therapist, dental ergonomic consultant and author of the book, *“Practice Dentistry Pain-Free: Evidence-based Strategies to Prevent Pain and Extend your Career”*. She is CEO of Posturedontics®, a company that provides research-based dental ergonomic education and is clinical instructor of ergonomics at OHSU School of Dentistry in Portland, Oregon. Recognized internationally as an expert in dental ergonomics, she has delivered over 700 lectures worldwide and also provided expertise on dental ergonomics to faculty and students at numerous dental universities.

Dr. Valachi has published over 80 articles in peer-reviewed dental journals and has developed **Online CE Video Courses** specifically for dental professionals at www.posturedontics.com. She lives in Portland, Oregon with her husband, Dr. Keith Valachi, who operates a private dental practice. Her new FREE eBook is available at www.posturedontics.com.

**Excerpts from the Online CE Video Course,
 "Home Exercise for Dental Professionals"
 All 24 exercises available at www.posturedontics.com**



Downward Squeeze
 Anchor band at top of door. Roll shoulders back and squeeze shoulder blades downward and together. Pause briefly and slowly return. Repeat 10-20 times.



Pointer Dog
 Pull navel to spine and hold this contraction throughout the exercise. Make sure back is flat and hips are level. Slowly lift the right arm, thumb pointing up, hold 4-5 counts, then lower it. Repeat for each arm and leg, performing 5 lifts on each.



External Rotation
 Slowly rotate the arm outward, then return. Keep elbow pressed firmly against your side throughout the exercise. Perform 10-20 repetitions with each arm.

Lower Abdominals
 Lie with both knees bent. Lift one leg until the hip is at 90°, then slowly straighten, lightly touch the floor, hold, then return the leg to 90° position. Repeat with the same leg 5-10 times. Do not let your back arch off the floor.



**Excerpts from the Online CE Video Course,
 "Chairside Stretching' & Trigger Point Therapy"**

All 20 Chairside Stretches available at www.posturedontics.com



THE UNTWISTER
 Legs in tripod position, resting elbow on knee. Stretch opposite arm overhead and look toward ceiling. Hold 2-4 breath cycles.



SCALENE STRETCH
 Anchor hand behind back or chair. Slowly bring opposite ear toward shoulder. Hold 2-4 breath cycles.



TRAPEZIUS STRETCH
 Anchor hand behind back or chair. Slowly bring opposite ear toward armpit. Hold 2-4 breath cycles.



SHOULDER CIRCLES
 Slowly exhale, roll shoulders forward, up and backward returning to the relaxed starting position. Repeat 5 times.

