

8th Annual UCSF LGBTQI Health Forum

“Open Wide”: Meth and its Impact on Oral Health

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Learning Outcomes:

- To understand why methamphetamine is more addictive than other illegal drugs
- To understand the effects of methamphetamine on the oral health of users
- To learn effective strategies for treating “meth mouth”
- To learn how to discuss substance abuse with patients

Key Concluding Points:

- The use of methamphetamine has become a ***global epidemic***.
- Methamphetamine ***negatively impacts*** the oral health of users.
- Multiple teeth that are blackened with decay, fractured and/or missing are ***diagnostic indicators*** of methamphetamine use.
- The delivery of safe, effective, and realistic care requires that the dental team ***know the drug use status of each patient*** to:
 - Prevent drug to drug interactions
 - Develop appropriate treatment plans and realistic patient expectations
 - Avoid dental malpractice associated with drug-related treatment failures and prescription-related relapses.

Meth Mouth's Unique Characteristics:

- Color (blackened), Age (young adults), Surface Location (Class III/V), Teeth (Anterior teeth usually most resistant are most affected)



3 years of meth use



5 years of meth use



15 years of meth use



30 years of meth use

You can identify methamphetamine users by...

- Signs of agitation, excited speech, have decreased appetites, and increased physical activity levels. Other common symptoms include: dilated pupils, high blood pressure, irregular heartbeat, chest pain, shortness of breath, nausea and vomiting, diarrhea, and elevated body temperature.
- Occasional episodes of sudden and violent behavior, intense paranoia, visual and auditory hallucinations, and bouts of insomnia.
- A tendency to compulsively clean and groom and repetitively sort and disassemble objects, such as cars and other mechanical devices.

Where to get help for substance abusers...

- California Department of Alcohol and Drug Abuse

1-800-879-2772
1-800-662-4357
1-916-327-3728
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Facility Locator, www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov

For More Information:

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, www.oas.samhsa.gov
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, www.oas.samhsa.gov
- Montana Meth Project, www.montanameth.org
- www.methresources.gov
- National Institute on Drug Abuse, www.nida.gov/Infofacts/methamphetamine

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