

Short Communication**Suction Denture: A Case Report on Dental Quackery**

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**ABSTRACT:** Dental quackery describes the misinterpretation of the diagnosis and treatment of the dental disease. Most commonly dental quacks are the self-styled experts, whose basic tools are very incompetent and also fraud. It is prevalent in India since many decades. Many dental quacks are practicing roadside, which makes money by doing unethical practice and ultimately hampering patient's oral health. Hereby, this article describes a case report of suction denture of palate in a 60 year old female patient.

**Key words:** Quackery; Quacks; Suction; Denture; Palate.

**INTRODUCTION**

As in the other fields of the medicine, dentistry is also a science based and highly regulated health care profession. It serves increasingly sophisticated and demanding patients. Nowadays, dentistry is facing numerous challenges; one of the most important is the dental quackery. Due to this unethical practice of the quackery, the patient's oral health is in danger, as many complications can arise after such practice.<sup>1,2</sup> As a dental practitioner, it is our responsibility to stop this dental quackery practice.<sup>1</sup> The present article describes a case of dental quackery in a 60 year old female patient.

**CASE REPORT**

A 60 year old female patient reported to department with a complaint of impinging upper denture from 6 months. Upon examination solitary pale eroded area of 3x3 cm in size with irregular border and pear shape was present on anterior part of palate. Eroded area was tender on palpation, slight grooving with no discharge (Fig 1).

On examination of maxillary denture suction disc was present with extrinsic stains (Fig 2). Occlusal maxillary cross sectional radiograph was performed with no bone abnormality detected and plasma sugar level was within normal limits.



*Figure 1: Solitary ulcer on anterior part of palate*



*Figure 2: Maxillary denture with suction disc*

The use of quack denture was discontinued immediately. Patient was prescribed with antibiotics for 5 days and topical steroids to reduce the inflammation and healing for 1 week and thereafter 2 weeks. After complete healing new denture was fabricated with Trevelon denture material and given to the patient.

**DISCUSSION**

Quacks exist in the dental profession especially in areas where there is poor access to oral healthcare either through lack of dentists or because of the cost of treatment at dental surgeries.<sup>2</sup> The term "Quackery" is

derived from the word quacksalver i.e. the person who boasts his salves.

Quackery can be defined as “the fraudulent mis-representation of one's ability and experience in the diagnosis and treatment of disease or of the effects to be achieved by the treatment offered.” Quacks are the persons who have observed and learnt themselves the techniques of the dental treatment. They learn these procedures while assisting dental surgeons or these may be inherited from their families and they adopted it as a profession.<sup>1</sup> Quack can also be defined as “the person who misrepresents their ability and experience in the diagnosis and treatment of the particular disease or effects to be achieved by their treatment. Quacks are untrained persons and basically do not have the scientific professional education in the field of the practice. Also their tools are usually incompetence and fraud.<sup>1,2</sup>

## QUACKERY IN PROSTHETIC DENTISTRY

A big world of quackery is seen in the field of Prosthodontics. Quacks commonly known by the names of denturists are fooling patients with using old extracted teeth to replace missing teeth and selling by the name of fixed prosthetics.<sup>3</sup>

### Various Faulty Prosthesis

**Suction Disc:** Dentures are fabricated with suction discs if the dentures did not provide sufficient retention and stability. These suction discs provide needed retention by inducing negative pressure on the tissue surface. This negative pressure induces harmful effect on tissues of the contact area by reducing blood circulation, which produces hypoxic state in the affected area and necrosis of tissue. The underlying bony part also affected by this leading to tissues perforation.<sup>3</sup>

**Wire Retained Fixed Partial Dentures:** Sometimes they also use wires to stabilize the tooth or denture with the support of adjacent teeth. These types of replacements are called

fixed dentures. Neither are these fixed, nor are they dentures; these are just oral health spoilers, which just damage the remaining healthy teeth. These procedures are very harmful to the patients as they can lead to bone loss and adjacent tooth loss.<sup>1,3</sup>

**Other Faulty Prosthesis:** Filling of midline diastema and other gaps between the teeth with artificial teeth retained with self-cure acrylic. Such prosthesis worsens the condition and creates more spaces between the teeth.<sup>3</sup>

### **HARMFUL EFFECTS OF DENTAL QUACKERY**<sup>1,4</sup>

Dental quack is characterized by a lack of sufficient knowledge and effectiveness for diagnosis, treatment or prevention in concern with the dental treatment. Also quacks lacks valid scientific base.

Thus the dental quackery can lead to various harmful effects like:

- Placement of suction disc can lead to erosion of the palatal mucosa.
- Fixed denture with self cure acrylic can lead to erosion of the gingiva, bone loss or loss of adjacent tooth.
- The use of unsterilized instruments can lead to transmission of life threatening infections.
- It can result in unnecessary root canal treatment of the involved teeth.
- Some dental quacks advices the use of direct application of 30% hydrogen peroxide to remove stains on teeth, which has harmful effect on pulp tissue like obliteration of odontoblasts, hemorrhage, resorption and inflammatory infiltration.
- It can lead to misdiagnosis and/or incorrect treatment for serious and potentially life-threatening Diseases

### HOW TO TACKLE QUACKERY

Most people think that quackery is easy to spot. Often it is not. Its promoters wear the cloak of science. They use scientific terms and quote (or misquote) scientific references.<sup>4</sup> In

the field of dentistry, these matters of quackery need to be carefully analyzed. Whether these street dentists can be legally trained with minor first-aid procedures should be given or not.<sup>4</sup>The other ways of increasing the accessibility to quality professional care for the rural areas should also be seen upon. The Government should urge fresh graduates to practice in rural areas and provide more incentives to them.<sup>3</sup>

**CONCLUSION:** Quackery is practicing dental treatment from the last many decades. Nowadays, modern quacks are the salesman and they play on fear. Many of the quacks are doing their procedures by roadside and making money from the dental treatments, which are harmful for the patients. Thus it is high time for the dental practitioners to fight against the quackery for the health of the patients and also importantly to save this prestigious profession.

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**How to cite this article:** Shaw E, Garg K, Mehrotra A, Mehrotra V. Suction Denture: A Case Report on Dental Quackery. Rama Univ J Dent Sci 2015 Dec;2(4):27-29.

**Sources of support:** Nil

**Conflict of Interest:** None declared