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In any health care setting, it is crucial to ensure a safe environment for both patients and health care providers. Dental offices are among the most common places where bacterial and viral infection might occur. This is why infection control procedures are stringently observed by dentists and their staff. Various precautionary measures are taken before conducting any intensive operation in the dental office. Some dentists require all equipment and accessories to be covered with protective dressing if not used.

The tools in a dental office can be classified as disposable and non-disposable. Non-disposable items must be cleaned and sterilized before use to prevent transmission of diseases. The phrase "universal precaution" is often encountered when talking about the usual practices in a dental office. This involves the use of protective outfit, including gloves, eyewear, and mask, and thorough washing of hands between operations. New gloves and disposable items are used in the succeeding operations.

Non-disposable items are sterilized in a number of ways. The most common and usually recommended methods include chemiclave (using chemical vapor), dry heat oven, and autoclave (using steam under pressure). In the environment created via these methods, bacteria and other harmful microorganisms cannot persist. Normally, items are sterilized in a separate room which is accessible from the operating area so the dentist can easily get any essential tool if the circumstance requires it.

Examining rooms are as sensitive as operating rooms. In some dental offices, an examining room is also where operations are performed. Consequently, it must be kept clean or free from any substances that can host bacteria and viruses such as blood, moisture, and used tools. Disposable tools such as prophylaxis angles are replaced after use and new items are prepared for every examination. Countertops and chairs are thoroughly decontaminated as well. All garbage and disposed products are placed in a specially sealed container to keep the environment safe from airborne bacteria.

Like the patients, employees in a dental clinic also need protection. There are certain regulations that directly protect dental staff from being exposed to infection, such as requiring them to use gloves and disposable prophylaxis angles. These regulations promote the patients' safety. Some patients become anxious when they see these regulations not fully implemented during an examination or an operation.

A patient must secure himself from potential infection by going to the right dental office. Aside from checking if the dentists and their staff use sanitized tools such as prophylaxis angles, he must also check whether the office's surfaces are clean and equipment are organized. Offices with more than one employee must be larger to provide safe moving space.

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