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A Systematic Review on the Prevalence of Musculoskeletal Disorders Among Dental Practitioners

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Abstract

Introduction: Musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs) are one of the most common occupational health concerns worldwide. Numerous studies have reported a higher prevalence of MSDs affecting the upper and lower extremities among dental practitioners. These are frequently attributed to poor ergonomic postures, prolonged static position, gender predilection and increased working hours and workload. **Materials and methods:** This systematic review was based on the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analysis 2020 (PRISMA) guidelines. The articles were retrieved from four search engines: PubMed, Scopus, Science Direct and Google Scholar. **Results:** 19 studies that fulfilled the eligibility criteria were included. A high prevalence of MSDs (55%-96%) was found among dental practitioners worldwide. The most common affected body parts included the

neck (26%-96%), shoulder (20%-90%), upper back (21%-82%) and lower back (21%-80%). Risk factors associated with MSDs included awkward working posture, younger age with less experience, female predilection, increased working hours and high workload. Conclusion: Overall, this review highlights the significant burden that MSDs impose on dental practitioners. However, larger studies with higher response rates are warranted to generate more accurate and conclusive results. More importantly, dental education should emphasise the knowledge and application of ergonomics among dental students to promote the necessary awareness and practice in reducing the prevalence of MSDs. © 2025 Universiti Putra Malaysia Press. All rights reserved.

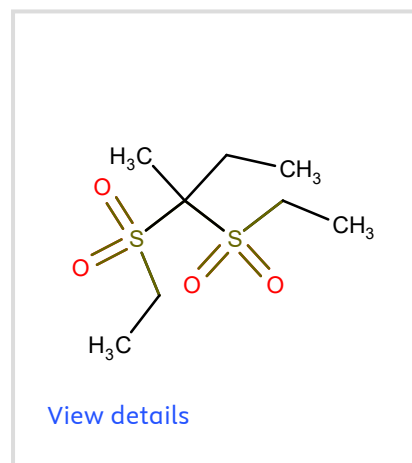
Author keywords

Dental practitioners; Dentists; Musculoskeletal disorders; Occupational hazards; Prevalence

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