

Appendix E: Oral Health Assessment Tools

The following tools are examples of oral health assessment tools, recognizing that these instruments are setting and client specific. The interpretation of the assessment results vary from tool to tool (based on unique scoring systems, etc.); however, the results should guide decisions regarding the development of an individualized care plan and evidence-based interventions.

| Oral Health Assessment Tool | Population | Reference |
|---|---|---|
| Oral Assessment Guide (OAG) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For use in acute care settings, ICU, cancer centres, rehabilitation settings | Eilers, J., Berger, A. & Petersen, M. (1988). Development, testing, and application of the oral assessment guide. <i>Oncology Nursing Forum</i> . 15(3):325-30. |
| Revised Oral Assessment Guide (ROAG) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Validated in three small studies of geriatric rehab clients | Andersson, P., Persson, L., Hallberg, I.R. & Renvert, S. (2004). Oral health problems in elderly rehabilitation patients. <i>International Journal of Dental Hygiene</i> . 2(2), 70-77. |
| Brief Oral Health Status Examination (BOHSE) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Validated in long-term care and residential care settings Can be used with cognitively impaired clients | Kayser-Jones, J., Bird, W., Paul, S., Long, L. & Schell, E. (1995). An instrument to assess the oral health status of nursing home residents. <i>Gerontologist</i> . 35(6):814-24. |
| Oral Health Assessment Tool (OHAT) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Also know as the Modified Brief Oral Health Status Examination | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For use in long-term care or residential care settings, and can be used with cognitively impaired clients | <p>See Sample 1 (Page 69)</p> <p>Chalmers, J., King, P., Spencer, A., Wright, F & Carter, K. (2005). The oral health assessment tool – validity and reliability. <i>Australian Dental Journal</i>, 50(3), 191-199.</p> <p>Chalmers, J., Johnson, V., Tang, J. & Titler, M. (2004). Evidence-based protocol: Oral hygiene care for functionally dependent and cognitively impaired older adults. <i>Journal of Gerontological Nursing</i>. 30(11), 5-12.</p> |
| The Holistic and Reliable Oral Assessment Tool (THROAT) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed and tested for use in elderly hospitalized patients in a single trial. | <p>See Sample 2 (Page 70)</p> <p>Dickinson, H., Watkins, C. & Leathley, M. (2001). The development of the THROAT: The holistic and reliable oral assessment tool. <i>Clinical Effectiveness in Nursing</i>. 5, 106-110.</p> |
| Mucosal Plaque Index (MPS) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures only mucosal and plaque indices Designed to assess oral care in groups of elderly patients/clients. | Henriksen, B., Ambjornsen, E. & Axell, T. (1999). Evaluation of a mucosal-plaque index (MPS) designed to assess oral care in groups of elderly. <i>Special Care Dentistry</i> . 19(4), 154-157. |

| Oral Health Assessment Tool | Population | Reference |
|---|--|---|
| National Cancer Institute (NCI) Scale | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ NCI is most commonly used in clinical trials ■ Scale to assess oral mucositis ■ Widely validated and extensively used. | World Health Organization (1997). <i>Handbook for reporting results of cancer treatment</i> . Author. pp.15-22. |
| World Health Organization (WHO) Grading Scale | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Measures anatomical, symptomatic and functional components of oral mucositis. ■ Combines both objective mucosal changes (redness and ulceration) with functional outcomes (ability to eat) to arrive at a score. ■ The WHO Grading Scale is very frequently used in oncology clinical practice | World Health Organization (1997). <i>Handbook for reporting results of cancer treatment</i> . Author. pp.15-22. |



Sample 1: Oral Health Assessment Tool (OHAT) also know as the Modified Brief Oral Health Status Examination

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| Oral Health Assessment Tool for Dental Screening (modified from Kayser-Jones et al (1995) by Chalmers (2004)) | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|------------------------|
| Client: _____ | | Completed by: _____ | | Date: ___/___/___ |
| Scores – You can circle individual words as well as giving a score in each category and can write notes in the category scores column also | | | | |
| Category | 0 = healthy | 1 = changes * | 2 = unhealthy * | Category scores |
| Lips | smooth, pink, moist | dry, chapped, or red at corners | swelling or lump, white/red/ulcerated patch; bleeding/ulcerated at corners | |
| Tongue | normal, moist roughness, pink, | patchy, fissured, red, coated | patch that is red &/or white, ulcerated, swollen | |
| Gums and tissues | pink, moist, smooth, no bleeding | dry, shiny, rough, red, swollen, one ulcer/sore spot under dentures | swollen, bleeding, ulcers, white/red patches, generalized redness under dentures | |
| Saliva | moist tissues, watery and free flowing saliva | dry, sticky tissues, little saliva present, resident thinks they have a dry mouth | tissues parched and red, very little/no saliva present, saliva is thick, resident thinks they have a dry mouth | |
| Natural teeth Yes/No | no decayed or broken teeth/roots | 1-3 decayed or broken teeth/ roots or very worn down teeth | 4 + decayed or broken teeth/roots, or very worn down teeth, or less than 4 teeth | |
| Dentures Yes/No | no broken areas or teeth, dentures regularly worn, and named | 1 broken area/ tooth or dentures only worn for 1-2 hrs daily, or dentures not named, or loose | more than 1 broken area/tooth, denture missing or not worn, loose and needs denture adhesive, or not named | |
| Oral cleanliness | clean and no food particles or tartar in mouth or dentures | food particles/ tartar/ plaque in 1-2 areas of the mouth or on small area of dentures or halitosis (bad breath) | food particles/tartar/plaque in most areas of the mouth or on most of dentures or severe halitosis (bad breath) | |
| Dental pain | no behavioral, verbal, or physical signs of dental pain | are verbal &/or behavioral signs of pain such as pulling at face, chewing lips, not eating, aggression | are physical pain signs (swelling of cheek or gum, broken teeth, ulcers), as well as verbal &/or behavioral signs (pulling at face, not eating, aggression) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> * Refer person to have a dental examination by a dentist <input type="checkbox"/> Person and/or family/guardian refuses dental treatment <input type="checkbox"/> Complete Oral Hygiene Care Plan and start oral hygiene care interventions for person <input type="checkbox"/> Review this person's oral health again on Date: ___/___/___ | | | | TOTAL SCORE: <u>16</u> |

Resources are available to support the use of this tool by nurses and other care providers. An online module on the Oral Health Assessment Tool (OHAT) contains interactive practice exercises.

The University of Iowa/Geriatric Education
 Best Practice Geriatric Oral Health Training
 E-learning module: The Oral Assessment Tool (OHAT)

<http://www.healthcare.uiowa.edu/igec/e-learn/lic/dentistry/default.asp>

Sample 2: The Holistic and Reliable Oral Assessment Tool – THROAT

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| | Normal – 0 | Mild – 1 | THROAT Moderate – 2 | Study NO Severe – 3 | Score | Comments |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|--|---|--------------|-----------------|
| 1) Lips | Smooth/pink/moist | Dry/no cracks | Dry/cracks | Ulceration/sores/ bleeding | | |
| 2) Teeth | Clean | Film localized plaque over teeth | Film of plaque over teeth in moist areas | Heavy visible deposits of plaque on and between teeth | | |
| • Dentures | Clean | Film localized plaque over teeth | Film of plaque over teeth in moist areas | Heavy visible deposits of plaque on and between teeth | | |
| • Both | Clean | Film localized plaque over teeth | Film of plaque over teeth in moist areas | Heavy visible deposits of plaque on and between teeth | | |
| 3) Gums/Gingiva | Coral pink/moist | Mild inflammation/slight redness/slight edema | Moderate inflammation/ redness/edema/ glazing | Severe inflammation/ marked redness/ edema/ulceration/ bleeding | | |
| 4) Mucous membrane | Coral pink/moist | Mild inflammation/slight redness/slight edema | Moderate inflammation/ redness/edema/ glazing | Severe inflammation/ marked redness/ edema/ulceration/ bleeding | | |
| 5) Palate | Coral pink/moist | Mild inflammation/slight redness/slight edema | Moderate inflammation/ redness/edema/ glazing | Severe inflammation/ marked redness/ edema/ulceration/ bleeding/thick mucous patches | | |
| 6) Tongue | Pink/moist/no coating | Slight coating evident | Coating evident/cracks/ small ulcers | Thick coating/discoloured /blistered ulcerations/cracks/ bleeding | | |
| 7) Floor of mouth | Pink/moist/no coating | Slight coating evident | Coating evident/cracks/ small ulcers | Thick coating/discoloured /blistered ulcerations/cracks/ bleeding | | |
| 8) Smell | No smell | Slight smell on breath only noticed close up | Noticeable smell on breath | Strong smell on breath | | |
| 9) Saliva | Watery consistency | Slight thickening | Thick and ropy | No saliva | | |