

An Experience of Dental Treatment for a Patient with Severe Dental Phobia Due to Mistrust in Medical Service

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Dental phobia maybe caused by mistrust in medical service and psychic trauma due to restrictive forcible dental treatment. We experienced a case of severe dental phobia with excessive mistrust in medical service.

The patient was a 20-year-old female. She visited our hospital with intolerable tooth pain due to neglected dental caries. Her phobia was caused by a compulsory dental treatment which she had with fear in infancy. On the first day, she was not even able to enter the treatment room in spite of all our attempts for more than five hours. On the 2nd visit, she was only able to have panoramic X rays, but she was still not able to enter the treatment room. Pain reliever (mefenamic acid) was prescribed. On the 3rd visit, she managed to sit on a dental chair. However, she still rejected any treatment. By the 8th visit, she gradually came to accept the easy dental treatment by the application of systematic desensitization procedure. However, she completely rejected the local anesthesia injection. She refused our recommendation to have dental treatment under intravenous sedation. Between the 9th and the 18th visits, she kept refusing the treatment for which local anesthesia was necessary though the pain was increasing. Finally on the 19th visit, she involuntarily accepted the local anesthesia under intravenous sedation, because the pain became intolerable. Between the 20th and the 30th visits, all remaining decayed teeth were treated under local anesthesia with intravenous sedation. However, the deep sedation was required to allay her deep fear.

It was suggested that we must not induce dental phobia by forcible dental treatment. In addition, the combination of systematic desensitization procedure and intravenous sedation proved to be effective for the patients with severe dental phobia.

Key words : severe dental phobia, intravenous sedation, dental treatment, systematic desensitization procedure