

Oral Care *is* Critical Care: The Role of the RDH in the ICU

Evidence-based research has identified **oral care** as a critical nursing intervention for decreasing the incidence of Ventilator Associated Pneumonia (VAP). VAP is a deadly condition that occurs in critically ill patients who need breathing assistance from a ventilator in intensive care units (ICU) in hospitals. In responding to this healthcare crisis, the CDC has emphasized the need for increased education and better oral care to be implemented in hospital units. However, minimal input from the dental hygiene profession has been solicited to develop these hospital protocols, which will provide high-quality interdisciplinary care that will ultimately save lives.

Few dental hygienists are aware of VAP and its deadly consequences. If we are to play an integral role in the care provided to these critically-ill patients, we must possess the proper knowledge and be aware of treatment protocols that will help to improve the outcome for VAP patients.

This course will present an overview of the oral health and dental hygiene issues specific to the population affected by this disease. The speaker will relate her experience, discuss current research, and provide insight as to how to foster YOUR involvement.

Objectives:

- Cite evidence-based research connecting oral care with critically ill patient care
- Define the disease state and diagnostic criteria for Ventilator Associated Pneumonia
- Identify CDC and Critical Care Nursing guidelines for oral care in intubated patients.
- Describe career options and collaborative projects between nursing and dental hygiene professions.

Presented by:

Cindy Kleiman RDH BS
Oral Care Consultant & Speaker
480-342-9655
cindyspeaking@gmail.com
www.cindyspeaking.com