

Dental Assistant Vocabulary Words

1. **Dentition:** Natural teeth in the dental arch.
2. **Mixed Dentition:** Mixture of permanent teeth (*adult teeth*) and primary teeth (*baby teeth*) that occurs until all primary teeth have been lost, usually between the ages of 6 and 12.
3. **Maxillary:** Upper jaw.
4. **Mandibular:** Lower jaw.
5. **Permanent Dentition:** Set of 32 secondary teeth (*adult teeth*).
6. **Primary Dentition:** Set of first 20 teeth (*baby teeth*).
7. **Occlusion:** Natural contact of the maxillary and mandibular teeth in all positions.
8. **Malocclusion:** Occlusion that is deviated from a class 1 normal occlusion.
9. **Posterior:** Toward the back.
10. **Anterior:** Toward the front.
11. **Rheostat:** Device used to regulate an electric current on the dental unit to run the motors that doesn't interrupt the circuit flow.
12. **Embrasure:** Triangular space in a gingival direction between the proximal (adjacent) surfaces of 2 adjoining teeth that are in contact.
13. **Furcation:** Area between 2 or more root branches.
14. **Edentulous:** To be without teeth
15. **Periodontal Disease:** Infections and other conditions of structures that support the teeth, gum, and bone.
16. **Mobility:** To have movement.
17. **Recession:** Process of withdrawal or wearing away from its normal location.
18. **Xerostomia:** Dryness of the mouth caused by reduction of saliva.
19. **Calculus:** Calcium and phosphate salts in saliva that become mineralized and adhere to the tooth surfaces.
20. **Pulp:** The part in the center of the tooth made up of living connective tissues.
21. **Uvula:** Pear-shaped projection at the end of the soft palate.
22. **Alveolar Process:** Portion of the mouth that in the functional position makes up the jaws and supports the teeth.
23. **Dental Papilla:** Gingivae between the teeth.
24. **Frenum:** Band of tissue that passes from the facial oral mucosa at the midline of the arch to the midline of the inner surface of the lip.
25. **Dentin:** Hard portion of the root that surrounds the pulp and is covered by enamel on the crown of the tooth.
26. **Enamel:** Hard outer surface layer of a tooth.
27. **Palate:** Roof of the mouth.
28. **Gingivitis:** Inflammation of the gingival tissues.
29. **Vestibule:** Space between the teeth and the inner mucosal lining of the lips and cheeks.
30. **Gingiva:** Masticatory mucosa that covers the alveolar process of the jaws and surrounds the neck of the tooth
31. **Bruxism:** Habitual grinding of the teeth, especially at night.

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32. **Incisor:** Single-rooted teeth with relatively sharp, thin edge located in the front of the mouth.
33. **Cuspid:** Canine.
34. **Bicuspid:** Premolar.
35. **Premolar:** Permanent teeth located between the molars and canine teeth.
36. **Molar:** Teeth located in the posterior aspect of the upper and lower jaws.
37. **Buccal:** Tooth surface closest to the inner cheek.
38. **Facial:** Tooth surface closest to the face. Facial surfaces closest to the lips are called *labial surfaces*, and facial surfaces closest to the inner cheek are called *buccal surfaces*; therefore, the term *facial* can be substituted for *labial* and *buccal*, and vice versa.
39. **Mesial:** Surface of the tooth toward the midline.
40. **Distal:** Surface of tooth distant from the midline.
41. **Occlusal:** Chewing surface of posterior teeth.
42. **Incisal:** Ridge on permanent incisors that appears flattened on facial, lingual, or incisal view after tooth eruption.
43. **Quadrant:** One-quarter of the dentition.
44. **Clinical Crown:** That portion of the tooth that is visible in the oral cavity.
45. **Alveolitis:** Pain and inflammation resulting from exposed bone associated with a disturbance of a blood clot after extraction of a tooth.
46. **Provisional Coverage:**
47. **Plaque:** Soft deposit on teeth that consists of bacteria and bacterial by-products.
48. **Demineralization:** Loss of minerals from the tooth.
49. **Remineralization:** Replacement of minerals in the tooth.
50. **Subgingival:** Referring to the area below the gingiva.
51. **Supragingival:** Referring to the area above the gingiva.
52. **Sterilization:** Process that kills all microorganisms.
53. **Disinfection:** Chemical used to reduce or lower the number of microorganisms on inanimate objects.
54. **Glutaraldehyde:** Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)–registered high-level disinfectant.
55. **Autoclave:** Machine used for sterilization by means of moist heat under pressure.
56. **Ultrasonic Cleaner:** Machine that loosens and removes debris by sound waves traveling through a liquid.
57. **Alginate:** Irreversible hydrocolloid material used for taking preliminary impressions.
58. **Dental Stone:** A form of gypsum that is typically yellow and is when a more durable diagnostic cast is required, or when a working model is needed for the fabrication of fixed or removable prosthetics, retainers, or custom trays.
59. **Topical Fluoride:** Fluoride that is applied directly to the tooth.
60. **Prophylaxis:** Administration of drugs to prevent disease or protect a patient.

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61. **Model Plaster:** Primarily used for pouring preliminary impressions for the fabrication of an edentulous model and diagnostic study models for case presentation and in the use of orthodontics.
62. **Needle Stick:** An accidental skin-penetrating stab wound from a needle, sharp instrument, etc. containing another person's blood or body fluid putting the assistant at risk for a bloodborne disease.
63. **Articulating Paper:** Paper used to check a patient's occlusion after a procedure has been completed.
64. **HIPPA:** The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 specifies federal regulations that ensure privacy regarding a patient's healthcare information.
65. **Prosthesis:** Fabricated replacement for a missing tooth.
66. **Contraindications:** Anything (*including a symptom or medical condition*) that is a reason for a patient to not receive a particular treatment or procedure because it may be harmful.