**Prevention and Control of Dental Caries**

***1. Increase the Resistance of the Teeth***

***Systemic use of fluoride***

Fluoridation of water, milk and salt;

Fluoride supplementation in the form of tablets and lozenges; and

Consuming a fluoride-rich diet such as tea, fish, etc.

***Topical***

Use of fluoridated toothpaste and mouthwash;

Use of fluoride varnishes (in-office application, longer duration of action, high fluoride content);

Use of casein phosphopeptide-amorphous calcium phosphate (CPPACP), which is available as tooth mousse, helps to remineralize the soft initial carious, demineralized areas of the teeth.

***2. Combat the Microbial Plaque by Physical and***

***Chemical Methods***

***Physical methods*:**

The correct method and frequency of brushing should be followed—in the morning and before going to bed and preferably after every major meal.

Tongue cleaning and the use of indigenous agents such as the bark of neem or mango (where toothbrush and paste are unaffordable) should be encouraged. The use of coarse toothpowder and tobacco-containing dentifrices should be avoided.

The use of various interdental cleaning aids such as dental floss, interdental brush, water pik, etc. supplements the cleansing effect of a toothbrush. Use of an electronic toothbrush in children and persons with decreased manual dexterity is recommended.

***Chemical methods*:** These include the use of a fluoride-containing toothpaste, mouthrinses and 0.2% chlorhexidine and povidine-iodine mouthwash. These should be used on prescription of a dental surgeon.

***3. Modify the Diet***

Reduce the intake and frequency of refined carbohydrates. Avoid sticky foods and replace refined with unrefined natural food. Increase the intake of fibrous food to stimulate salivary flow, which is protective against caries. Consume caries-protective foods such as cheese, nuts, raw vegetables, fruits, etc. Stimulate salivary flow with sugarfree chewing gum. Xylitol (a sugar substitute)-containing chewing gum, if chewed between meals, produces an anticaries effect by stimulating salivary flow.