

Short Communication

Dental Tourism in India: A Twist in Modern Dentistry

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ABSTRACT

The modern world is a witness in which oral diseases at their boom due to changes in lifestyle and food habits. Although awareness regarding dental problems increasing but it is very difficult to find a suitable way out to resolve them. As we know that the treatment of oral diseases are challenging due to its high financial outlook. Thus people wants to acquire a sound system to solve their oral problems with least expenditures and dental tourism might create the best opportunities to resolve all dental problems throughout the world. Here we review this article to enlighten the facts gazing on dental tourism that gives a twist in conventional dentistry.

Keywords: *Tourism, India, Dentistry*

Dental tourism is a part of medical tourism in which persons looking for dental care needs outside their local oral health care delivery systems which usually escorted with a holiday. The package of dental tourism includes the total expenditure of dental care, transportation, accommodation, meals and side trips with attractive prices [1]. The notion of dental tourism becomes popular in recent years, particularly among Europeans and Americans. The low cost of dental care services like root canals (RCTs), veneers, restorations, crowns and dental bridges, dental implants, orthodontic in India is the most important reason to opt the destination for dental care by foreign individuals [2]. This novel concept is gaining impetus in the recent times, the ministry of tourism in 2003 reported that 10% of about 2 million passengers were visited in India for various medical treatments [3] and dental tourism constitutes 10% of Indian medical tourism which might grow in future [4]. Thus dental tourism has immense potential to grow and raise the Indian economy; therefore here we review this article to enlighten the facts gazing on dental tourism that gives a twist in conventional dentistry.

THE SCOPE OF DENTAL TOURISM IN INDIA

The concept of dental tourism is booming in India due to offering affordable dental care worldwide. In India Mumbai, Delhi, Kerala, Goa, Jaipur, Chandigarh, Chennai becoming the privileged destination for dental tourism because of its superior infrastructure and technology. In recent years apart for the health care facilities, India also emerges as one of the most preferred tourist destinations in the world due to low cost of traveling than other foreign countries [4]. A study by Naik NTK found that India not only provides cheaper dental care but waiting time is also less [5].

REASONS FOR DENTAL TOURISM DESTINATION IN INDIA

1. Cost-effective treatment

As we know the expenses of dental care is very less in India when we compare with foreign countries like the US, Europe, UK, and Australia. A study by Ghatala MH et al

found that the cost of dental filling in the United State of America (USA) and Europe is 300\$ to 400\$, whereas in India it is 20\$ to 40\$ only. The cost of root canal treatment is 1,300\$ in the West but only 200\$ to 250\$ in India. Similarly, dentures charge in India is 300\$ while 1,000\$ in the West. The expenditure of Dental Implants is 3,000\$ to 5,000\$ in the US and Europe but only 1,100\$ in India along with ceramic prosthesis [6]. Apart from India other countries like Mexico, Poland, Hungary, and Thailand also supplies a quality of dental care at affordable charges as compared with the UK and US [7]. A study by Elena et al found that Romania also offers dental services at a reduced cost up to 50% as compared to Western Europe [8].

2. Less waiting time

It was observed that India has less waiting time to provide dental care needs [9] this is due to ease to access the number of skilled professionals. In India, tour guides or dentists fix their former schedule for tourists according to their travel plan that results in less waiting time [4].

3. Medication cost

The Indian market has a strong pharma division with no import duty that is why the cost of medication in India is very less as compared with other countries.

4. Tourist attraction

The history, civilization, religious diversity, art, and craft of India attract traveller to choose as their vacation destination. The travel cost of India from different countries is also affordable [10].

ENDORSEMENT OF DENTAL TOURISM IN INDIA

To promote dental tourism in India quality of dental care with affordable prices is foremost concern. There is an extreme need for coordination between regulating bodies like Indian Dental association (IDA) with its local channels and dental tourism organizations. It is essential that the central ministry of foreign affairs monitors and guide the IDA to coordinate with tourism corporations of various states including a written declaration of quality dental care.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN INDIA

Asepsis or sterilization is the biggest challenge in India, faced by dental and medical tourism. In countries like the

United States (US), United Kingdom (UK), Europe patient's protection is the main priority but in a country

like India dentist and other healthcare professionals hardly follow the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations [11]. Thus to maintain sterilization and asepsis is challenging in India. Another major issue in India is a lack of appropriate training like the United States and Europe [12]. Apart from these challenges dental tourism in India still in growing condition, Mexico followed by India and Hungary is the leading destination for dental tourism [13].

CONCLUSION

After emerging medical tourism, dental tourism reaches its zenith in recent years. The burden of oral diseases increased in the past few years due to changes in lifestyle and dietary habits which ultimately gives a financial burden to the economy. Dental tourism is a new tool that helps to promote dentistry all over the world if properly supported by government and regulating bodies.

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