

**Oral-Health-Related Knowledge, Attitudes and Oral-Care Practices of
Nursing Undergraduates of Faculty of Allied Health Sciences,
University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka**

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As primary caregivers, it is important to establish adequate knowledge and a better attitude towards oral care in nursing officers. This study aimed to assess the oral health knowledge, attitude and oral-care practices among nursing undergraduates of the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka. A cross-sectional analytical study was carried out in March 2019. Self-reported knowledge, attitude and oral-care practices of all students were assessed using a pre-tested self-administered questionnaire. Oral-health-related knowledge was evaluated under six sub scales. The majority of the participants were females, 109/148(73.65%). The highest mean score for knowledge was on dental plaque 7.16 (SD 4.5) while the lowest was on oral cancers, 3.89 (SD 3.13). However, nearly one-third of the undergraduates (37.84%) were not aware of the main purpose of tooth brushing. A positive attitude towards oral health was reported by 45 (30.41%, 95% CI 22.3-38.5%) undergraduates. Nevertheless, the distribution of the scores for the knowledge and attitude was not statistically different between gender and among different academic year of study. 80% (n=118) of undergraduates brushed twice a day and 72% (n=107) used fluoridated toothpastes. Slightly more than half of the undergraduates (53.4%, 95% CI 44.6-62.2%) had snacks in between main meals while 41.9% (95% CI 33.3-50.6%) had maintained regular dental visits. Although a majority showed good oral practices, a significant percentage was not aware of the main purpose of tooth brushing. Similarly, the knowledge on oral cancer, which is a highly prevalent condition in Sri Lanka, was not satisfactory. No difference was found in scores of knowledge and attitude on oral health between genders or among academic year of study. Thus, suggest further studies and incorporation of properly designed oral health education programmes for the nursing undergraduates.

Keywords: Oral health, Knowledge, Attitude, Oral care practice