**Lec : 1 Dental Ethics Dr. Maha Al ani**

**ETHICS FOR DENTISTS**

Ethics in healthcare has become a vital issue for related professions when so many changes appear to be occurring simultaneously.

***Ethics or moral philosophy***

Is a branch of [philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy) that involves systematizing, defending, and concepts of right and wrong [conduct](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Action_%28philosophy%29)

* • Ethics is not the same as feelings
* • Ethics is not religion
* • Ethics is not following the law
* • Ethics is not following culturally accepted norms
* • Ethics is not science.

***Ethics are***

* Moral Principles
* • What is good and bad
* • What is right and wrong
* • Based on value system
* • Ethical norms are not universal – depends on the subculture of the society

**The aims (objectives) of studying ETHICS:**

1. To understand what is meant by ethics in Dentistry.
2. Focusing on the term “profession” and how it relates to ethics in dentistry.
3. Become familiar with elements and principles of ethical decision making.
4. To clarify the ethics of patient relations, delegation of duties, financial arrangements, and managed care.
5. To know the difference between dental law and dental ethics.
6. Define the normative theories of ethics and apply them to ethical issues in practice.
7. Apply the principles of dental ethics to everyday practice.

**What is meant by ETHICS?**

**Ethics are** … Ethics refers to standards of behavior that tell us how human beings ought to act in the many situations in which they find themselves as friends, parents, children, citizens, businesspeople, teachers, professionals, and so on.

The word ethics comes from the Greek ethos originally meaning character or conduct. It is typically used interchangeably with the word moral which is derived from the Latin word mores, which means customs or habits. Together these two terms refer to conduct, character, and motivations involved in moral acts. Thus, ethics are not imposed by a profession or by law, but by moral obligation. Ethics are an unwritten code of conduct that encompass both professional conduct and judgment. Though the details of the written ethical code may vary from profession to profession.

Ethics are the moral principles or virtues that govern the character and conduct of an individual or a group. Ethics, as a branch of both philosophy and theology, is the systematic study of what is right and good with respect to character and conduct.

The object of ethics is to emphasize spirit (or intent) rather than law. Dental ethics applies moral principles and virtues to the practice of dentistry.

In simple words, **Ethics** is a set of philosophical beliefs and practices concerned with the distinction between right and wrong.

**Why ethics are important?**

Ethics affect virtually every decision made in a dental office, encompassing activities of both judging and choosing. Ethics affect and obligate relationships with patients, the public, office staff, and other professionals.

**What are codes of ethics?**

Many dental organizations have published codes of ethical conduct to guide member dentists in their practice. For example, the American Dental Association has had a Code of Ethics since 1866. A code of ethics marks the moral boundaries within which professional services may be ethically provided. Codes of ethics and professional guidelines have quasi-legal force; non-compliance can result in sanctions from censure to loss of professional status.