

Effect of Poor Oral Hygiene on General Health: Evidence Based Findings

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Bacteria from the mouth can easily get into the bloodstream and cause infection and inflammation wherever it spreads. WHO 2012 stated that about 60 - 90% of school children and nearly 100% of adults have dental cavities, severe periodontal Diseases is found in 15 - 20% of middle-aged (35 - 44 years) adults, globally, about 30% of people aged 65 - 74 have no natural teeth, oral disease in children and adults is higher among poor and disadvantaged population groups, risk factors for oral diseases include an unhealthy diet, tobacco use, harmful alcohol use and poor oral hygiene, and social determinants [1]. Recent studies showed that poor oral health can result in systemic diseases like pancreatic cancer, stroke, Rheumatoid arthritis, Obesity, and Diabetes mellitus. Researchers found that periodontal disease, in an 18-year study on over 48,000 men, was significantly associated to oral health status in patients with pancreatic cancer, as well as lung, kidney, and blood cancers. Also they stated that eliminating periodontal infection and reducing periodontal inflammation in diabetic patients produced significant improvements in their hemoglobin A1C levels. This suggests that optimizing dental health could help prevent the damaging consequences of diabetes. In other study the risk of obesity, abdominal obesity, and high percentage of body fat was higher in individuals with a lower daily frequency of tooth brushing and usage of secondary oral products [2-7]. Onur B., et al. [8] found that Dental health and oral hygiene behaviors have positive correlation with poor oral health in children with psychiatric disorders and psychosocial issues, like hyperactivity/inattention. Therefore, prevention of oral health problems like decay, gingivitis and periodontal diseases can go a long way toward decreasing the risk for more serious health problems throughout the body. The following general guidelines were recommended [9]:

- Brush at least twice daily, with a fluoridated toothpaste.
- Apply fluoride varnish to teeth two times a year (2.2% NaF).
- Brush last thing at night and at least on one other occasion.
- Use fluoridated toothpaste (1,350 - 1,500 ppm fluoride).
- Spit out after brushing and do not rinse, to maintain fluoride concentration levels.
- The frequency and amount of sugary food and drinks should be reduced.

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