

Preventive Cardiology in Dentistry

- Does periodontal disease really increase the risk of heart attack?
- Is there something you should do differently for patients who have (or are at risk for) cardiovascular disease?
- How can you collaborate with physicians, nurses and diabetes educators to care for patients who have or who may be at risk for cardiovascular disease?

Since groundbreaking research on the potential connection between periodontal disease and cardiovascular disease (CVD) appeared in 1989 (Mattila), there has been a plethora of publications about this subject in many prestigious medical journals. Explanations on the biological mechanisms by which periodontal disease could cause systemic inflammation, promote atherogenesis, and increase the risk for myocardial infarction and stroke are well-founded. Although short-term studies suggest that treatment of periodontal disease can reduce systemic inflammation and endothelial dysfunction, evidence that periodontal therapy can prevent atherosclerosis, heart attacks or stroke is lacking. What are dentists and dental hygienists to do with this inconsistent information?

This course helps oral healthcare professionals to make sense of the research and consensus opinions on the links between periodontitis and cardiovascular disease. The program empowers participants to incorporate the latest evidence on the relationship of periodontal and CVD, screen patients to identify those who may be at risk for CVD, and build collaborative relationships with non-dental healthcare providers to increase point-of-care screening and cross referral of patients at risk for CVD and periodontal disease.



Suggested Audience: Dentists, dental hygienists, dental assistants, business staff

Suggested Length: 3-4 hours



LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- Recognize the significance of cumulative inflammatory burden
- Discuss the relationship between periodontal disease and atherosclerosis and periodontitis as a modifiable risk factor for heart disease and ischemic stroke
- Accurately articulate the risk periodontal disease may pose in the development and progression of atherosclerosis
- Identify patients at risk for cardiovascular disease
- Articulate key messages for educating patients about the relationship between periodontal disease and CVD
- Implement strategies for medical-dental collaboration in caring for patients at risk for periodontal disease and atherosclerosis
- Articulate the findings of various consensus opinions related to clinical application of evidence of the association between periodontal disease and atherosclerosis

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