

Periodontal therapy reduces hospitalizations and medical care costs in diabetics

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Today, during the 41st Annual Meeting & Exhibition of the American Association for Dental Research (AADR), held in conjunction with the 36th Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association for Dental Research, an abstract titled "Periodontal Therapy Reduces Hospitalizations and Medical Care Costs in Diabetics" to determine if periodontal treatment was associated with the number of hospitalizations and cost of medical care among diabetics with periodontal disease.

A longitudinal study compared medical costs for diabetic subjects with periodontal disease who received periodontal treatment versus periodontally untreated controls over a three year period. Subjects were enrolled in Highmark (Blue Cross) medical and United Concordia Companies, Inc. dental plans, and received medical and dental services. The periodontal treatment group was treated in the first year and maintained thereafter. The control group had received incomplete periodontal therapy prior to baseline and did not receive regular maintenance during the study.

"There have been emerging links between oral infections and systemic diseases such as [diabetes](#), which is increasingly prevalent in our population," said lead researcher Marjorie Jeffcoat, professor and dean emeritus of the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine. "My research team and I had looked at other datasets and we knew that health care costs could be reduced, but we wanted to look at the hospitalizations and see how those could be reduced. This study provided direct insight as to how lower hospitalizations could be achieved through

periodontal therapy, and we will further this study by analyzing other chronic diseases and conditions such as heart attacks, strokes and pregnancy with pre-term birth."

Periodontal treatment was associated with a significant decrease in hospital admissions, physician visits and overall cost of medical care in diabetics. Savings averaged \$1,814 per patient in a single year. A 33% decrease in hospital admissions was observed.

Provided by International & American Associations for Dental Research

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