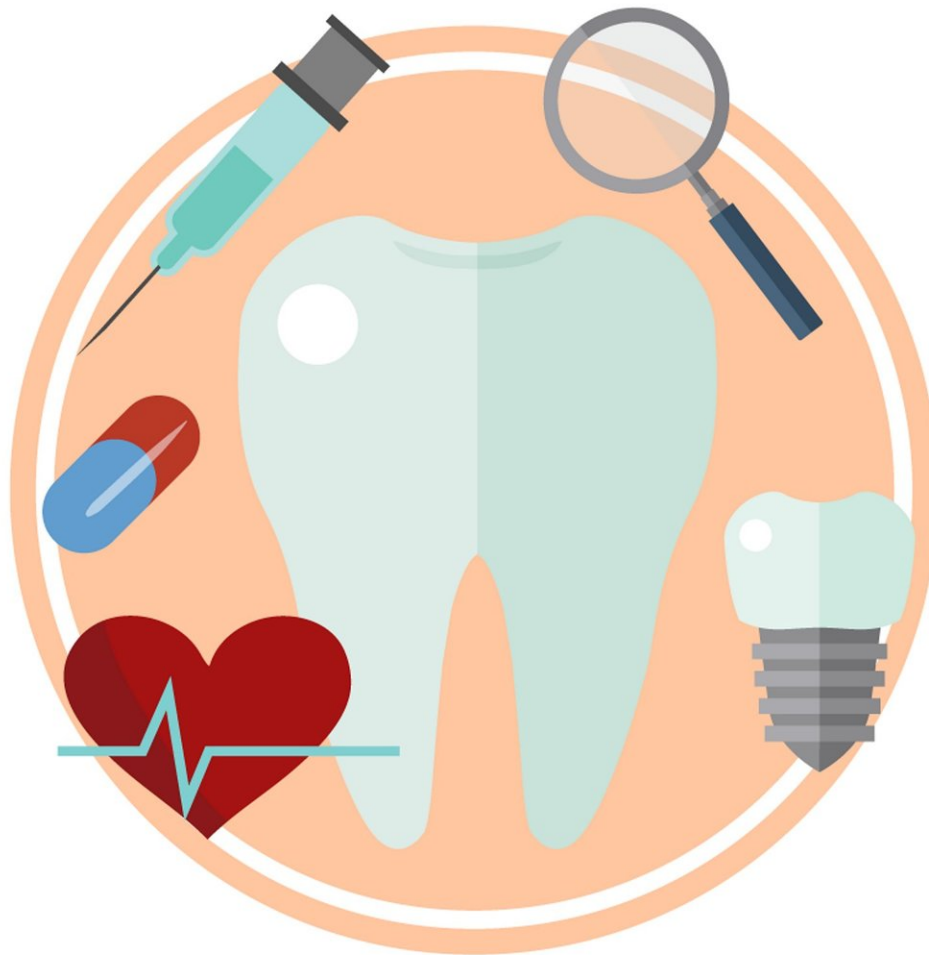


Indigeneity: A strength-based approach to oral health of Indigenous children

March 19 2024



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A study aiming to determine whether a relationship exists between constructs of Indigeneity and untreated caries in First Nations children in Manitoba and Ontario, controlling for selected, was presented at the 102nd General Session of the [IADR](#), which was held in conjunction with

the 53rd Annual Meeting of the American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research and the 48th Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association for Dental Research, on March 13-16, 2024, in New Orleans, LA, U.S..

The abstract, "Indigeneity: A Strength-Based Approach to Oral Health of Indigenous Children." was presented during the "Late Breaking Abstracts II" Poster Session that took place on Friday, March 15, 2024 at 3:45 p.m. Central Standard Time (UTC-6).

The study, by Anna Ness of the University of Toronto, Canada, explored the potential relationship between untreated caries and constructs of Indigeneity such as traditional language, participation in cultural events, and sharing [traditional foods](#) in First Nations [children](#) in Manitoba and Ontario, controlling for selected survey and clinical exam results (n=157).

Predictor variables measured Indigeneity constructs derived from the First Nations Regional Health Survey. Outcome variables measured untreated caries using the dt index. Chi-squared tests were used to determine the statistical association between mother's Indigeneity and untreated decay in children. Logistic regression using a combination of direct and statistical procedures was used to control for confounders.

The children's mean age was 3.4 (SD=1.1), and mean number of decayed teeth was 5.5 (SD=4.1). Three-quarters of the caregivers were biological mothers (n=108/157). A child's odds of having three or more decayed teeth are 59% less (OR=0.41, 95% CI 0.19-0.89, p=.02) if the mother's primary spoken language is a First Nations language. Speaking a First Nations language in daily life remained the most important factor associated with untreated decay after adjusting for child's age, mother's

education level, [food insecurity](#), self-perceived racism in the health care system, and other confounders (OR=0.341, 95% CI 0.13-0.91, p=.03).

The study concluded that speaking a First Nation language is a powerful predictor that may be protective against [dental caries](#). Indigeneity constructs may be harnessed as strength-based approaches to research and programming with First Nations children as [language](#) and traditional culture are positive Social Determinants of Health for First Nations Peoples.

Provided by International Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research

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