

An Epidemiological Survey on Periodontal Health Related Awareness of Betel Nut Chewing in Mangalore Population

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Abstract

Introduction: Betel nut, an addictive substance ranks fourth after nicotine, ethanol and caffeine. An estimated population of about 600 million chew betel nut across the world. Chewing betel nut has potential harmful effects on the gingival and periodontal health.

Aim: To evaluate the awareness of effect of betel nut chewing on the periodontium in Mangalore population. **Materials and Methods:** The study population for the survey consisted of 150 patients between the age group of 20-60 years visiting the outpatient, Department of Periodontics, A.B Shetty Memorial Institute of Dental Sciences. A questionnaire was distributed which consisted of 15 questions. A prior consent was taken from all patients. The results were statistically analyzed using Pearson's Chi square test.

Results: A total of 150 patients were investigated, out of which 36% betel nut chewers belonged to an age group of 30-40 years. Prevalence of betel nut chewing was found to be 65% in males and 35% in females. Bleeding gums, halitosis, burning sensation, stains/yellowish deposits, gingival recession, and sensitivity of teeth were significantly higher among the betel nut chewers. Majority of the patients reported that the risk associated with betel nut consumption was oral cancer. **Conclusion:** The results indicated that betel nut chewing showed significant effects on the periodontium like gingival recession, bleeding gums, halitosis, burning sensation, stains and sensitivity of teeth. It can be concluded that more than two thirds of betel nut chewers were younger than 50 years and had a male predilection. The patients also showed lack of awareness regarding the deterioration of their periodontal health.