

PRESS RELEASE

GUM DISEASE AND CARIES, THE MOST COMMON HUMAN CONDITIONS

The EFP launches the Perio & Caries campaign to help tackle gum health and tooth decay

- The European Federation of Periodontology (EFP) is promoting a European initiative to shed light on the interactions and similarities between tooth decay and gum disease
- Practical recommendations, scientific reports, and other educational materials are freely available for dentists, researchers, healthcare professionals, and the general public
- A new dedicated site – perioandcaries.efp.org – helps to raise awareness of the relationships, common risk factors, and differences between dental caries and periodontal diseases, as well as the implications regarding prevention and treatment of the two most pervasive oral conditions in of humans

Brussels, January 11th, 2018. Gum disease and tooth decay are the two most widespread oral conditions in the world, and in fact the two most frequent non-communicable human diseases.¹ Both are preventable and share common genetic, aetiological and environmental factors. Given that they follow different trajectories, they have traditionally been studied separately.

Not anymore. Today, for the first time the European Federation of Periodontology (EFP), puts forward a new, common approach by launching Perio & Caries, an ambitious European-wide project aimed at raising awareness among scientists, health practitioners, and the public about the associated causes, risk factors, interactions and prevention measures than may affect both periodontal diseases and dental caries.

¹ Petersen P.E. The World Oral Health Report 2003: Continuous improvement of oral health in the 21st century - The approach of the WHO Global Oral Health Programme. Community Dent Oral Epidemiol 2003; 31(Suppl. 1):3-24: http://www.who.int/oral_health/media/en/orh_report03_en.pdf

The core element of the Perio & Caries project is the newly-created dedicated site perioandcaries.efp.org, which contains a wealth of educational materials freely available and downloadable. These publications include a specially-written scientific report compiled by Prof Nicola West, as well as five targeted recommendation brochures, each bringing concise advice for oral health professionals, other healthcare professionals, researchers, policymakers, and the population at large.

The Perio & Caries initiative, sponsored by Colgate, has been designed to disseminate the outcomes of Perio Workshop 2016, a major scientific meeting held in La Granja, Spain, which was jointly organised by the EFP and ORCA (European Organisation for Caries Research). It was co-chaired by Prof Mariano Sanz (EFP) and Prof Andreas Schulte (ORCA). All Perio & Caries publications are based on the knowledge generated at Perio Workshop 2016.

Based on the contributions from 75 leading global cariologists and periodontologists organised in four working groups, Perio Workshop 2016 pioneered the exploration of “The boundaries between dental caries and periodontal disease.” It reviewed all available scientific evidence on common links between these oral conditions, including identified similarities – and the distinct characteristics of each – and recommended clear preventive strategies to help tackle them.

The scientific conclusions of Perio Workshop 2016 are publicly available in a special open-access supplement of the EFP-edited *Journal of Clinical Periodontology*.²

Furthermore, the Perio & Caries site offers a series of related videos, news, additional documentation, and all the scientific papers produced by the four working groups at Perio Workshop 2016, which examined the role of microbial biofilms; the interaction of lifestyle, behaviour and systemic diseases; prevention and control; and age-related effects, all in relation to dental caries and periodontal diseases.

Available to everybody for free

Perio & Caries materials are to be shared with all 30 EFP-affiliated national societies of periodontology in Europe, northern Africa, the Middle East, and Caucasia, and their members – around 14,000 periodontists, dentists, researchers, and other oral healthcare professionals interested in gum health. Stakeholders can freely take advantage of this Perio & Caries content in their dental practices, schools, laboratories, and companies. The same applies to any other people who may be interested.

“The project Perio & Caries disseminates for the first time a new approach to tooth decay and gum disease as connected conditions,” explains Mariano Sanz, co-chair of Perio Workshop 2016. “Building on the outcomes of Perio Workshop 2016, Perio & Caries pays attention to the common risk factors which make people lose their teeth, either because of caries, or periodontitis, or both. Emphasis has been put on the patient’s quality of life. Not only how these widespread oral diseases impact upon their

² *JCP*, special issue: Proceedings of the 12th European Workshop on Periodontology, “The Boundaries between Caries and Periodontal Diseases”: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jcpe.2017.44.issue-S18/issuetoc>

wellbeing, but also the reverse situation, how socio-economic factors heavily influence the prevention, development, and treatment of these diseases.”

“Sugar intake, smoking and excess weight are the three key factors to be reduced in order to help tackle both periodontal disease and caries,” points out Iain Chapple, secretary general of the EFP and co-chair of one of Perio Workshop 2016’s working groups. “By bringing down carbohydrate intake to less than 25 grammes per day, by fighting and ideally eliminating the smoking habit, and by avoiding obesity, we are not only improving our general health, but having a meaningful, positive impact against gum disease and tooth decay.”

“The main message of Perio & Caries is that tooth loss, periodontal diseases and caries are nearly always preventable,” concludes Nicola West. “Following simple recommendations such as brushing teeth with fluoride toothpaste twice a day, reducing the amount of sugar and starch in the diet, staying away from tobacco, and seeing your dentist twice a year would improve dental and overall health as well as alleviate the economic burden of gum disease and tooth decay. We hope that medical professionals will heed our campaign’s motto: ‘Teeth are for a lifetime. Take action!’ and will guide their patients accordingly.”

The EFP – the global benchmark in periodontology

The European Federation of Periodontology (EFP, www.efp.org) is the leading global voice on gum health and gum disease and the driving force behind: a) EuroPerio, the most important periodontal conference in the world; b) European Gum Health Day, main international awareness initiative of gum health; and c) Perio Workshop, the leading meeting on periodontal science. Furthermore, the EFP edits the *Journal of Clinical Periodontology*, one of the most authoritative scientific publications in this field.

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The EFP thanks Colgate for its support and its unrestricted educational grant in support of the Perio & Caries project.

Perio & Caries recommendation brochure for oral health professionals is available at:

<http://www.efp.org/publications/projects/perioandcaries/recommendations/Guideline01-Oral-healthcare-team.pdf>

Perio & Caries recommendation brochure for non-dental health professionals is available at:

http://www.efp.org/publications/projects/perioandcaries/recommendations/Guideline02_Non-dentistry-health-professionals.pdf

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