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[American Academy of Periodontology](#)

Salivary melatonin may decrease periodontal disease severity according to new study findings

Researchers studied the relationship between salivary melatonin levels and the community periodontal index score used to assess periodontal disease status

CHICAGO – Salivary melatonin may play an important role in maintaining periodontal health, according to a new study published in the Journal of Periodontology. This is one of the first attempts to examine the influence of salivary melatonin upon periodontal disease, an inflammation that destroys the tissues and bone that support the teeth.

Researchers found that melatonin, a hormone created by the pineal gland, may be able to protect the oral cavity against free radicals produced by inflammatory diseases. Melatonin has strong antioxidant effects that can protect cells against inflammatory processes and oxidative damage. Melatonin supplements are commonly promoted to ease jet lag and hasten sleep.

"Patients with higher salivary and melatonin ratios had lower community periodontal index (CPI). CPI is the score used to assess periodontal status," said Pablo Galindo, DDS, Department of Oral Surgery, School of Dentistry, University of Granada, Spain. "This finding suggests that the melatonin may fight against infection and inflammation possibly due to its antioxidant, anti-aging and immunoenhancing ability."

It was also observed that older patients had lower saliva volumes and melatonin ratios and higher CPI scores compared to younger patients with increased salivary and melatonin levels and decreased CPI scores.

"Further research is required to fully explain the relationship between melatonin and its influence on periodontal health," said Kenneth A. Krebs, DMD and AAP president.. "Until we know more, it's important for people to talk to their dental professional about the state of their periodontal health. Periodontal disease and dental decay are the primary causes of adult tooth loss."

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STUDY BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Thirty-seven patients with different degrees of periodontal disease were studied. The mean age was 55 and included 21 females and 16 males. All participants underwent a medical and dental examination. Salivary and plasma melatonin levels and CPI status were collected from each patient.

For more information including a referral to a periodontist or a free brochure entitled Periodontal Diseases: What You Need to Know, visit the AAP website at www.perio.org or call toll-free at 800/FLOSS-EM (800.356-7736).

The American Academy of Periodontology is an 8,000-member association of dental professionals specializing in the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases affecting the gums and supporting structures of the teeth and in the placement and maintenance of dental implants. Periodontics is one of nine dental specialties recognized by the American Dental Association.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

A copy of the JOP article "Relationship Between Salivary Melatonin and Severity of Periodontal Disease" is available to the media by contacting the AAP Public Affairs Department at 312/573-3243. The public and/or non-AAP members can view a study abstract online, and the full-text of the study may be accessed online for \$20.00 at <http://www.joonline.org/>.

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