

PERIODONTAL DISEASE AND DEMENTIA

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Course Description

5 million people in the United States are affected by dementia and this number is rising every year. While the science behind this mental condition is still developing, many articles suggest a link between dementia and periodontal disease. But how are the two diseases related? You may have seen posts online such as “Take care of your oral health and prevent dementia.” Or “chronic periodontitis leads to brain inflammation, fewer brain cells, and more amyloid-beta (plaque found in tissues in patients with Alzheimer’s disease)”. Those simplified interpretations are dangerous. We know about the oral-systemic link and studies found associations between periodontitis and dementia. However, we have a relationship between the two diseases much more complicated. We have to use the evidence-based approach and carefully interpret the findings.

Lecture Method

In our course, we will use many articles, from clinical trials to systematic reviews to provide you with the most scientific findings that may impact the dental professional. We will discover the suggested mechanisms that potentially explain the association between the two diseases, including periodontal pathogens, inflammatory mediators, vascular changes, etc. Through the course, you will understand how to explain the problems to your patients and build foundational knowledge that you can build on, as new research emerges.

Upon completion, the participants will:

1. Understand how inflammatory mediators found in periodontitis can affect the brain
2. Understand how pathogens found in periodontitis can affect the brain
3. Explain to the patient concerns related to periodontitis and its potential effect on the brain
4. Understand the reason the conclusion is not evident yet
5. Expand knowledge on the topic of oral systemic health