

Commentary

Commentary: Cannabinoids for Collaborative Care

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Commentary

There is growing awareness that what happens in the mouth does not always come from the mouth and what happens in the mouth can affect what happens in the rest of the body. The medical-dental connection is an important part of this movement especially in the recognition of increasing numbers of adults with multiple chronic conditions [1] and our continued lag behind other countries to improve the overall health of our people.

Oral conditions such as caries, periodontal disease, temporomandibular joint (TMJ) dysfunction, chronic infections, and airway/sleep disorders have been found to be not only risk factors, but in some cases direct causes of the chronic diseases plaguing all ages. For example, *Porphyromonas gingivalis*, a bacterial pathogen in periodontal disease, has been found in the plaque of cardiovascular disease and Alzheimer's [2,3].

In the healthcare siloed world, dentistry treats periodontal disease with improved home care, periodic deep cleaning, oral rinses and surgery. A newer approach incorporates these same modalities and considers oral pH, the microbiome [4], Autonomic Nervous System (ANS) balance, sleep and airway, stress management and cortisol, nutrition, and more. Lab tests such as CRP, HbA1c, ESR, IL-6 are ordered, and dentists refer and confer with their medical colleagues.

Instead of waging a war of scraping, cutting and burning the bacteria; good and bad from the oral environment, there is a growing shift in focus to making the oral terrain less hospitable for pathogens and restoring a healthy microbiome, proper pH, and utilizing a collaborative team approach with physician colleagues to discover and treat all existing factors.

In this issue, a new treatment utilizing products from the world of phytocannabinoids shows promise in providing a treatment approach that restores balance by modulation of various physiological processes and bridges the medical dental world. Multi-authored manuscripts of originally published material emphasize the years of effort invested into technology, biological sciences, advanced chemistries and clinical studies necessary to bring this next potential breakthrough [5] to the dental operator.

The world of phytocannabinoids offers great promise for restoring oral balance and for those patients and practitioners working collaboratively to prevent and reverse the epidemic of chronic disease. We agree with the authors expanded vision, to emphasize the need of dentists and physicians and all associated health care professions will be necessary if we are to establish and manage the continuing care of dental patients spanning hygiene and procedural intervention.

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