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Effect of chewing herbal leaves on oral microflora and halitosis

Arpit Singh¹ and Seerat Singh Sekhon²

¹Dental College and Research Institute, India

²Shaheed Kartar Singh Sarabha Dental College, India

Halitosis is one of the most common complaints of patients reporting to the dental offices, which have affected a large proportion of population especially in the developing countries. Most common cause of malodor is related to the indigenous microflora of sub gingival areas and related tongue coating in the oral cavity. Approximately 90% of oral malodor originates from oral cavity while remaining 10% is from systemic and non-oral routes. In rural and suburban areas of the developing countries, chewing of twigs and barks of some trees is the common practice of cleaning teeth to get rid of fast developing microorganisms. The present study was therefore conducted to evaluate the effects of chewing herbal leaves and ginger bits on reducing the microbial count to control halitosis. This study was carried on groups of volunteer subjects who were asked to chew 6-7 leaves of basil (Tulsi), mint, mango, ginger bits and curry leaves daily for 7 days revealed increased pH values immediately and 30 minutes after chewing. Maximum reduction in the microbial count (about 95%) was observed with basil leaves followed by mint, ginger, curry and mango respectively. Microbial count recorded as c fu/ml on nutrient agar medium was obtained using serial dilution techniques. Zones of inhibition formed against isolated oral microbes with aqueous solution of these herbal leaves also showed the same results when studied by agar diffusion method.

Biography

Arpit Singh is a 5th year Intern Doctor in Dentistry. He is currently working on a research to develop low-cost technology through the use of herbal adjuncts to improve oral health. He is a Member of World Health Organization's Generation Saviour Association and Mother Teresa Charitable Institution Punjab, India. They have organized numerous camps spreading the awareness on the importance of maintaining a good oral hygiene and ill effects of tobacco on health. They have participated in numerous government campaigns such as National pulse polio program and city cleanliness drive.

arpitforever@hotmail.com

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