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The effect of oral function on subjective taste sensitivity in the elderly**Hyo-Jung Jung, Yong-Guang Min and Hyung-Joon Ahn**
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The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of oral function and factors on the subjective taste sensitivity of the elderly. Participants were elderly people (mean age, 74.10 ± 5.40 years, 15 men and 56 women) who were able to communicate and take oral examinations and voluntarily participate at the senior citizen center. The questionnaire included self-assessed items on taste sensitivity, nutritional status, difficulty in food intake and the Korean version of the Oral Health Impact Profile-14 (OHIP-14K). Participants underwent assessment of dentition status, Mixing Ability Index (MAI), Repetitive Saliva Swallowing Test (RSST), oral moisture and taste threshold test was using the 6 step concentrations of solution for sweet, salty, sour and bitter. Participants were divided into good ($n=34$) and poor ($n=37$) groups according to their subjective taste sensitivity. There was a positive correlation between swallowing ability and sweet, salt, bitter in good group. In the poor group, chewing ability, swallowing ability, oral moisture, Oral Health-Related Quality of Life (OHRQOL) were positively correlated with bitter. Univariate and multivariate logistic regression analyses were performed to examine the association between subjective taste sensitivity and demographic characteristics, difficulty in food intake, masticatory function. As a result, the swallowing ability (Odds Ratio [OR]: 0.327, 95% Confidence Interval [CI]: 0.137-0.783) and the threshold for bitter (OR: 7.418, CI: 2.146-25.645) showed a risk of decline the subjective taste sensitivity. We found a significant association between subjective taste sensitivity and swallowing ability. Therefore when patients complain about diminished taste, must assess oral status as well as taste sensation and improving oral function may be necessary measure.

Biography

Hyo-Jung Jung has graduated from the Department of Dental Hygiene. Currently, she is a Doctoral student at Yonsei University College of Dentistry.

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