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Probiotics in dental caries management

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Dental caries still remains one of the most common diseases worldwide which is a multi-factorial disease with a microbial nature. Sometimes, antibacterial agents are administered in order to reduce cariogenic micro-flora, however, a complete eradication of caries-associated microorganisms has proved to be difficult and almost impossible to obtain. The World Health Organization has defined probiotics as "Live microorganisms which, when administered in adequate amounts, confer a health benefit on the host". The effect of probiotics on dental caries and its related risk factors has been evaluated in several experimental studies, using different strains; *Lactobacillus rhamnosus* GG, *L. casei, L. reuteri, L. plantarum, L. brevis* CD2, *Bifidobacterium* spp. *etc*. were proposed and used to obtain caries incidence reduction, mutans streptococci and lactobacilli count change, plaque pH control and root caries lesions reversal. Several appropriate vehicles of administration of probiotic strains have been proposed. Dairy products supplemented with probiotics are a natural means of oral administration and easily adopted in dietary regime for adults and children. However, specifically formulated devices with slow release of the microbial strain might be needed in order to oral diseases prevention and control. Another uncertain aspect of the probiotic use is whether the probiotics species really are able to colonize the oral habitat, and how long the microbial shift was induced. The use of probiotic strains for caries prevention showed promising results even if only few studies have demonstrated clear clinical outcomes. Therefore, the scientific evidence is still poor. A continuous regular almost daily intake is probably required; this maybe a compliance aspect to be considered. However, for all products effective in caries prevention (i.e., fluoride and chlorhexidine) a frequent intake is required, so a possible way of administration could be to insert probiotic in other daily preventive products like toothpaste.

Biography

Sedighe Sadat Hashemikamangar has graduated from Tehran University of Medical Sciences 6 years ago. His Specialty is operative dentistry. He is the faculty of the operative department of Tehran University of Medical Sciences. He has published 12 articles in the field of operative dentistry and dental caries management.

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