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Oral health status and perceptions among cardiovascular disease patients in two tertiary hospitals in yaounde

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Dental caries and periodontal disease are the most frequent oral pathologies, affecting some 3.5 billion persons worldwide. The magnitude of bucco-dental pathologies may be exacerbated by co-morbidities associated with cardiovascular diseases (CVD). Cardiovascular diseases (CVD) cause some 17.8 million deaths annually worldwide, more than three quarters of which occur in low income and middle-income countries. In 2013, an estimated 1 million deaths were attributed to CVD in sub-Saharan Africa. Treatment seeking attitudes are modulated by the level of awareness and disease perceptions.

Objectives: The purpose of our investigation was to assess the oral health status and their perceptions among cardiovascular disease (CVD) patients.

Material and method: We carried out a cross sectional study from November 2019 to May 2020 in the cardiology units of the Yaoundé General and Central Hospitals. We enrolled consenting patients aged 18 years and above. Following an interview whereby sociodemographic and clinical data were collected, an oral examination was carried out to assess the oral health status. The Silness and Loe plaque index, Loe and Silness gingival index, periodontal pocket depth were used as indicators of oral health status. Data were analyzed using the Epi info software version 7.2.3.1. Fischer's exact test and odds ratio were used to assess the level of association between poor oral health status and CVD. Statistical significance was considered at p-value <0.05.

Results: Out of the 210 patients who participated in our study, 140 (66.7%) were females, for a sex ratio of 1:2. The mean age was 60 ± 13 year, and patients aged 61-70 years were the most represented (30.5%). Most of the participants had a primary school level of education (33.81%), were professionally unemployed (31.9%). Of the 210 patients examined, 196 had at least one oral pathology, giving a prevalence of 93.3% of oral morbidity. The pathologies were dental caries (85.3%), gingivitis (80.4%), periodontitis (44.8%), dental wear (54.8%) and xerostomia (25.7%). A statistically significant relationship was observed between periodontitis and heart failure (p-value < 0.05) but not with hypertension, valvulopathy and other cardiovascular conditions studied. Few participants (18.6%) had the right attitude towards their oral health. Only 64 (30.5%) participants reported to have seen a dentist since they were diagnosed with a CVD.

Conclusion: There was poor oral health status and a low perception of oral health among patients with cardiovascular diseases. The main pathologies were dental caries, gingivitis, periodontitis, dental wear and xerostomia. We recommend sensitization on the importance of a good oral hygiene and oral health practices in these patients as well as treatment of existing lesions to prevent complications.

Biography

Takougang and his team based at the Department of Public Health, Faculty of Medicine & Biomedical Sciences at the University of Yaoundé are currently undertaking a study to determine how community-directed interventions approaches can be used to bring health services to a population who is geographically isolated and therefore has difficulty in accessing formal health services.