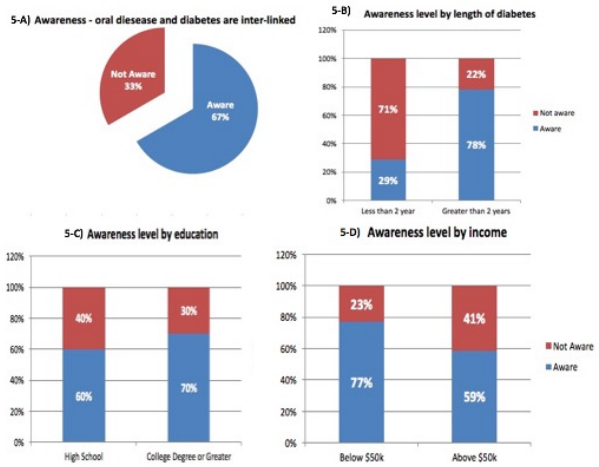
Oral Health and Diabetes are interlinked – Do Diabetics know enough?

Dr. Manju Natarajan B.D.S, MS-Student, Merrimack College, Massachusetts.

Abstract (300-word limit)

Introduction: Diabetes is becoming a serious health issue as it leads to heart disease and other health complications. The link between diabetes and oral disease is proven in many scholarly literature. The bi-directional relationship between the two is well known among healthcare academia, and its professional community. **Purpose:** The goal of this study is to understand how much of this awareness and knowledge has reached common people suffering from diabetes. Specifically, this study ventures to understand if the diabetics are aware of the oral disease complications and their attitude towards oral health. The results of this study could aid in developing health promotion programs targeting diabetics to positively influence their quality of life. **Methodology:** Thirty (30) diabetics who are members of the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) in Massachusetts were recruited through convenient sampling method. Responses to a series of questions relating to demographic, symptomatic, attitude, oral hygiene practices and awareness-level were gathered through a two-page questionnaire. Data analysis was done using statistical tools such as descriptive analysis, relative frequency measures and correlation analysis. **Results**: 67% of the respondents were aware of the link between oral health and diabetes; 87% had positive attitude towards oral health; minimum of 73% had no oral symptoms; only 27% conformed to dentist recommended everyday oral hygiene practices; Correlation of oral hygiene practices and less symptomatic measure had an R value of 0.82 **Conclusion:** A positive attitude towards oral health and above average awareness of the link between oral health and diabetes did not translate to regular oral hygiene practices. The correlation analysis between oral symptoms and oral hygiene practices showed that higher the number of oral hygiene practices, the lesser the number of symptoms this group had. Hence, reinforcing the practices of oral hygiene through diabetic intervention programs could improve the quality of life for diabetics.

Image



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Biography (150-word limit)

Dr. Manju Natarajan - B.D.S, C.D.A is a foreign trained dentist and a certified dental assistant in the US. She has over 3.5 years of Dental experience in India and has also volunteered 1000+ hours with various organizations in both India and the US. She is currently pursuing her Masters in Health Sciences with a research focus on "Oral health awareness among Diabetics". She has published a research article titled "Robotics in Implant Dentistry" in Indian Dental Association Journal.

Email: Manju.parthiban@gmail.com
Phone No: 859 806 7149

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