Dental Hygienists’ Awareness of Celiac Disease

**Background:** Research has shown that periodontitis has been associated with diabetes and heart disease. Less is known, however, about the association between the oral cavity and celiac disease. Further, almost no literature was found that documented the awareness of oral health professionals regarding their knowledge of celiac disease.

**Purpose:** The purpose of this project was to assess the knowledge level of dental hygienists regarding their general knowledge of celiac disease as well as their knowledge of enamel defects and other oral conditions linked to celiac disease.

**Methods:** Dental hygienists were invited to participate in a web-based survey designed to obtain this information. This study used a survey research design and descriptive statistics, including frequencies, to analyze the data. IRB approval was obtained to conduct the study.

**Results:** Of the total number of respondents (N=67), most indicated they “moderately” aware of celiac disease (n=39, 60%), but over half (68%) were not aware that celiac disease had oral manifestations. For those who identified related oral manifestations, aphthous ulcers were the most frequently identified oral manifestation followed by atrophic glossitis (53%).

**Conclusion:** While most of the dental hygienists were moderately aware of celiac disease, they had less knowledge of the related oral manifestations. Continuing education may improve the awareness of the oral manifestations of celiac disease.