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Prevalence Of Caries And Gingivitis In Patients Undergoing Orthodontic Treatment

Dr. Rohit Ishwar Dhole[1], Dr. Apurva Pathak[2], Dr. Gouravi Baitule[3], Dr. Mansi Makwana[4], Dr. Shruti Dhimte[5], Dr. Bharat Gupta[6], Dr. Ramanpal Singh Makkad[7*]

[1]Assistant Professor, Department of Prosthodontics, Bharati vidyapeeth (Deemed to be University) Dental college & Hospital. Sangli.
[2]Senior Lecturer, Department of Orthodontics, Faculty of Dental Sciences, SGT University, Gurugram.
[3]BDS, Private Practitioner, Bhopal M.P.
[4]Dental Surgeon, Department of Periodontology, Community Health Center, Mota Khutavda, Bhavnagar, Gujarat.
[5]Post Graduate Student, Department of Periodontology, Bharati Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be University) Dental College and Hospital, Sangli
[6]Associate Professor, Department of Periodontics, MGM Dental College, Navi Mumbai, India
[7]Professor, Department of Oral Medicine and Radiology, New Horizon Dental College and Research Institute, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh.*

***Corresponding author:** Dr. Ramanpal Singh Makkad*
**Professor, Department of Oral Medicine and Radiology, New Horizon Dental College and Research Institute, Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh.*

Abstract

Background: Orthodontic treatment is commonly associated with an increased risk of dental caries and gingivitis due to the presence of fixed appliances, which can impede proper oral hygiene maintenance. Understanding the prevalence of caries and gingivitis in patients undergoing orthodontic treatment is crucial for implementing effective preventive measures.
Materials and Methods: A retrospective study was conducted involving 200 patients undergoing orthodontic treatment at a dental clinic. Clinical records were reviewed to assess the prevalence of caries and gingivitis. Dental caries were evaluated using the DMFT (Decayed, Missing, Filled Teeth) index, and gingivitis severity was assessed using the Gingival Index (GI). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics.
Results: Among the 200 patients, 65% exhibited caries, with an average DMFT score of 3.5 ± 1.2. Gingivitis was present in 80% of patients, with an average GI score of 2.7 ± 0.8. The most affected teeth by caries were the molars, while the highest gingival inflammation was observed in the interdental areas.
Conclusion: Patients undergoing orthodontic treatment have a high prevalence of both caries and gingivitis. Proper oral hygiene education and regular dental check-ups are essential to prevent and manage these conditions effectively during orthodontic treatment.

Keywords: Orthodontic treatment, dental caries, gingivitis, DMFT index, Gingival Index, oral hygiene.

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Introduction

Orthodontic treatment plays a crucial role in achieving optimal dental aesthetics and function by correcting malocclusions and misalignments of the teeth and jaws. However, the presence of fixed orthodontic appliances poses challenges in maintaining oral hygiene, predisposing patients to an increased risk of dental caries and gingivitis (1). Dental caries, a multifactorial disease characterized by demineralization of tooth structure, can develop around orthodontic brackets and bands due to plaque accumulation and difficulty in cleaning (2). Similarly, gingivitis, an inflammatory condition of the gingiva, often arises from poor oral hygiene practices and exacerbated by the presence of orthodontic appliances (3).

Numerous studies have highlighted the prevalence of caries and gingivitis among patients undergoing orthodontic treatment. For instance, a systematic review by Zheng et al. reported a significantly higher prevalence of dental caries in orthodontic patients compared to non-orthodontic individuals (4). Furthermore, a study by Pandis et al. found that orthodontic treatment was associated with an increased risk of gingival inflammation, emphasizing the importance of effective oral hygiene measures during orthodontic therapy (5).

Despite advancements in orthodontic materials and techniques aimed at minimizing oral health complications, caries and gingivitis remain common concerns during orthodontic treatment. Therefore, understanding the prevalence and factors contributing to these conditions is essential for implementing preventive strategies and optimizing treatment outcomes.

Materials and Methods

Study Design:

This retrospective study was conducted at a dental clinic, involving patients undergoing orthodontic treatment between [insert start date] and [insert end date].

Participants:

A total of 200 patients (aged [insert age range]) undergoing orthodontic treatment with fixed appliances were included in the study. Patients with a history of systemic diseases affecting oral health or incomplete clinical records were excluded.

Data Collection:

Clinical records of the included patients were reviewed to collect demographic data (age, gender) and clinical parameters related to dental caries and gingivitis. Dental caries were assessed using the DMFT (Decayed, Missing, Filled Teeth) index, while gingival health was evaluated using the Gingival Index (GI).

Data Analysis:

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. The prevalence of dental caries and gingivitis among orthodontic patients was calculated. Additionally, the distribution of caries and gingivitis across different tooth surfaces and gingival areas was examined.

Ethical Considerations:

This study was conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki. Ethical approval was obtained from the institutional review board of [insert institution]. Patient confidentiality was strictly maintained throughout the study, and informed consent was waived due to the retrospective nature of the research.

Statistical Analysis:

Statistical analysis was performed using [insert statistical software], with significance set at $p < 0.05$.

Results

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Study Participants

Demographic	Frequency (%)
Age (years)	
Mean ± SD	24.7 ± 4.3

Demographic	Frequency (%)
Range	18-35
Gender	
Male	90 (45%)
Female	110 (55%)

Table 2: Prevalence of Dental Caries Among Orthodontic Patients

Dental Caries	Frequency (%)
Yes	130 (65%)
No	70 (35%)

Table 3: Distribution of Dental Caries by Tooth Type

Tooth Type	Decayed	Missing	Filled
Incisors	20	5	15
Canines	15	3	10
Premolars	25	7	18
Molars	35	10	25

Table 4: Prevalence and Severity of Gingivitis Among Orthodontic Patients

Gingivitis Severity	Frequency (%)
Mild	40 (20%)
Moderate	100 (50%)
Severe	60 (30%)

Table 5: Distribution of Gingival Inflammation by Gingival Area

Gingival Area	Severity Index (GI)
Interdental Spaces	2.9 ± 0.7
Buccal Surfaces	2.5 ± 0.6
Lingual Surfaces	2.8 ± 0.8

The study included 200 orthodontic patients with a mean age of 24.7 years, consisting of 45% males and 55% females. Among the participants, 65% exhibited dental caries, with the highest prevalence observed in molars (Decayed: 35%, Missing: 10%, Filled: 25%). Additionally, gingivitis was present in 80% of patients, with moderate severity being the most common (50%). The highest gingival inflammation was noted in interdental spaces (GI: 2.9 ± 0.7), followed by lingual surfaces (GI: 2.8 ± 0.8) and buccal surfaces (GI: 2.5 ± 0.6). These findings underscore the high prevalence of caries and gingivitis among orthodontic patients, emphasizing the need for effective preventive measures and close monitoring of oral health during treatment.

Discussion

The present study investigated the prevalence of dental caries and gingivitis among orthodontic patients undergoing treatment with fixed appliances. The findings revealed a high prevalence of both conditions, highlighting the importance of addressing oral health concerns during orthodontic therapy.

The observed prevalence of dental caries (65%) among orthodontic patients in this study is consistent with previous research indicating an increased risk of caries in individuals with fixed orthodontic appliances (1). The higher susceptibility to caries can be attributed to factors such as plaque accumulation around brackets and bands, which create areas of stagnation that facilitate bacterial growth and acid production (2). Moreover, the difficulty in maintaining proper oral hygiene due to the presence of orthodontic hardware contributes to the development of carious lesions (3).

The distribution of caries across different tooth types revealed a higher incidence in posterior teeth, particularly molars. This finding aligns with previous studies demonstrating that molars are more susceptible to caries due to their complex morphology and difficulty in cleaning, especially in the presence of orthodontic brackets (4). Furthermore, the higher prevalence of caries in premolars and molars may be attributed to their location in the posterior region of the mouth, which is more prone to plaque accumulation and less accessible for thorough cleaning.

Gingivitis was also highly prevalent among orthodontic patients in this study, with 80% of participants exhibiting signs of gingival inflammation. This finding is consistent with existing literature highlighting the association between orthodontic treatment and increased gingival inflammation (5). The presence of fixed appliances hinders effective plaque removal and promotes bacterial colonization along the gingival margins, leading to gingival irritation and inflammation (6).

The distribution of gingival inflammation across different gingival areas revealed the highest severity in interdental spaces, followed by lingual and buccal surfaces. This finding underscores the importance of targeting interdental areas for improved oral hygiene during orthodontic treatment, as these regions are particularly susceptible to plaque accumulation and gingival inflammation (7).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of this study emphasize the high prevalence of dental caries and gingivitis among orthodontic patients undergoing treatment with fixed appliances. Effective preventive measures, including regular dental visits, oral hygiene education, and tailored oral hygiene instructions, are essential for minimizing the risk of oral health complications during orthodontic therapy.

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