Editorial

Root caries a challenge to the restorative dentist in the next decade

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Caries on the surface of the tooth with receded gums would be a challenge to treat with its anatomical location at the cervical third on the exposed root surfaces, mostly associated with enlarged gums, leading to difficulty in diagnosis and restoration. Understanding the risk factors, methods of restoration, and prevention strategies of root caries needs immediate attention with focus of clinical research to alter the future.[1]

Changing clinical presentation of root caries in the last decade is related to:

1. Age group affected - Not geriatric anymore. The adults are also quite prone to root carries. This could be related to the lifestyle, chronic systemic illness, and poor oral hygiene. In addition, diet and nutrition play an important role in the development of root caries
2. Clinical presentation of caries has also been altered. This could be due to the poor immune system in the oral cavity, which is related to the general health of the patient and salivary composition and nature.[2]

Dysbiosis in the oral cavity is due to the systemic health, which leads to change in the composition and nature of saliva, leading to increase in the opportunistic microorganism, thus resulting in root caries.

The typical feature of root caries, clinically, is that it is located at the cervical third, which is a difficult area to access anatomically, and it continues to spread lly around the tooth at the neck of the tooth leading to breakage of the crown. Another important feature of root caries is that it spreads to all teeth When it is not been treated which classifies it as rampant root caries.

There is no adequately validated risk assessment tool for root caries; the available indices specifically for root caries do not help in evaluating or comparing the clinical studies.[3]

Future research needs to be focused on investigating risk factors and prevention strategies that can be used and planned accordingly to prevent root caries.

Increase in life span, decrease in nutrition, poor oral hygiene and chronic systemic illnes are the predisposing factors for root caries, 30% of the Indian population may be affected by root caries in future which would alter the quality of life and well-being of the Indian population. Oral health policies focusing on the risk factors, validation, and prevention of root caries need to be formulated.[4]

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