**Oral Health and Awareness in Adults with Congenital Heart Disease**

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Background: Patients with Congenital Heart Disease (CHD) are at high risk to develop aninfective endocarditis. Bacteria entering from the oral cavity can superinfect endocardial microlesions.Thus, oral health is essential to prevent the potentially lethal infective endocarditis. Data on the prevalence of oral health and patients' awareness of risk factors in adults with CHD is limited and therefore the aim of the study.
Methods: Adults with CHD were enrolled in a prospective observational study at the German Heart Center Munich, Germany. The patients were asked to complete a specific questionnaire. Additionally, a dentist performed an examination and documented the amount of decayed filled and missing teeth and the plaque-index as indicators for caries and quality of dental hygiene. The DMFT-Score (decayed+missing+filled) was calculated and the cardiological profile of the patient noted.
Results: The median age of the 112 participants was 31,5 (range 18-77) years. 38,4% did not know about the link between oral health and heart disease. 10,7% did not identify poor oral health as risk factor for cardiac complications.10,7% felt anxious about dental treatment because of their CHD. In 20,5% active caries was found. The mean DMFT-Score was 7,91 (+/- 6,54). No association between severity of CHD and DMFT-Score was shown (p=0.45). The DMFT-Score was higher in patients requiring an antibiotic endocarditis prophylaxis (p=0,001). These patients were also older (p=.045). Age and DMFT-score correlate positively (p=.000).
Conclusion: Awareness about the importance of an excellent oral health in ACHD must be improved. The effective prevention measures in dentistry can lower the prevalence of poor oral health.