Studies show that oral health is a good indicator of immune system health. In addition, studies suggest that measures used to improve oral health also benefit immunity.

**Holistic Health**

Global theories of medicine suggest that the best approach to healing involves considering the body as a whole. Today’s healing experts, such as Dr. Mehmet Oz, take a global or holistic approach to healing diseases, including autoimmune and inflammatory disorders. By combining alternative and conventional treatment programs, Dr. Oz encourages patients to look at lifestyle factors, nutrition, and supplements. In particular, he incorporates meditation, yoga, reflexology, energy healing and massage, into his heart-surgery protocol and recommends nutritional supplements, proper diet, stress reduction, and exercise for his patients.

**Early Studies**

In 1939, the Harvard educated dentist, Dr. Weston Price, described similar findings in his book *Nutrition and Physical Degeneration*. Concerned by the rising increase in degenerative diseases, Dr. Price and his wife traveled around the world studying the effects of industrialization and processed foods on the dental and general health of native cultures. Time and again, Dr. Price showed how civilizations that relied on native crops, such as fish, whole grains, and fresh dairy products, enjoyed good dental and overall health. When refined sugars, refined wheat, and processed foods were introduced to the culture, both dental health and physical health suffered as evidenced by deformed dental arches, gum disease (gingivitis) susceptibility to infections, (particularly an increased incidence of tuberculosis), a rise in rheumatological disorders, and an increased rate of cancerous growths.

**Systemic Inflammation**

The oral cavity is considered a front-line shield against systemic inflammation. When the oral cavity shows evidence of infection and inflammation, inflammatory conditions such as type 2 diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, cancer, hypothyroidism, and atherosclerosis are much more common.

Oral inflammation and inflammatory diseases are also linked by their ability to cause a rise in inflammatory markers, such as C-Reactive Protein (CRP). Researchers at Harvard School of Public Health have also determined that poor oral health is associated with an
increased risk of pancreatic cancer. Swedish researchers have also found that patients with gum disease were twice as likely to have cardiovascular disease, dangerous lipid levels, and higher levels of cytokines known as leukotrienes. Leukotrienes are lipid-deprived markers of inflammation.

**Reducing Inflammation**

Studies have also shown that antioxidant supplements such as CoQ10 that are known to reduce systemic inflammation also reduce oral inflammation when they're added to toothpastes and dental rinses. Other supplements that help reduce inflammation both systemically and orally include green tea, aloe vera, vitamins D and C, and pomegranate. Other ingredients that have been found to benefit teeth and gums when added to dental treatments include xylitol, lactoferrin, hydrogen peroxide, and folic acid.

**Resources:**


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