

# The Physicians Should Pay More Attention to the Oral and Dental Issue

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## To The Editor

Oral and dental health plays an important role in the human body systems. However, medical training courses frequently separate the physicians and the dentists; causing the lack of the knowledge of each other. Many clinical conditions may involve the oral or dental symptoms which often confused the physicians. One example is the burning mouth syndrome [1] which we believe most of the physicians have never heard of it before. Here, we report one case to highlight clinical wisdom.

A 67-year-old woman with ovarian carcinoma was admitted for chemotherapy. Before the therapeutic course, she complained of severe “mouth pain” which even made her difficulty in water drinking followed by poor intake. The dentist and the ear-nose-throat doctor were consulted who found only a small ulcer lesion in the mouth which cannot explain the severe pain; the psychiatric doctor was consulted later. In the psychiatric interview, she complained the pain located not only in the peri-lip region but also the tongue and extended to the oral pharynx. During the consultation, she was noted to reveal remarkable anxiety toward the upcoming chemotherapy. After discussing with her physician and family, low dose anxiolytics was prescribed and her condition got improved gradually with the chemotherapy started fluently.

The issue of oral and dental health is noteworthy; nevertheless, the knowledge of the physicians toward the correlated issue was very limited. In other words, besides of the medical illness that directly involved the oral cavity, physicians paid relatively little attention to the oral cavity. However, evidences are increasing for the periodontal medicine to be linked with diversification of systemic conditions which includes diabetes, cardiovascular disease, anaemia, liver diseases and ankylosing spondylitis [2]. Even

dementia and cognitive decline have been suggested to be correlated with oral disease which may play a role of the modifiable risk factor for dementia [3, 4]. Considering the high incidence of the oral and dental illness [5], it seems that the importance of the roles for oral and dental conditions in the medical illnesses was under-estimated. We suggested that the physicians place emphasis on the oral and dental issue along with a comprehensive treatment for the patients.

## Reference

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