

Thursday 7th February 2008

## **US Study Links Heart Attacks with Chronic Periodontitis**

**A US dentist is the latest voice among dental and heart experts to say that patients with heart disease are more likely to suffer from gum disease and tooth loss.**

**A researcher at a New Jersey Dental School has determined that people over age 60 with a specific genetic component may be predisposed to acute coronary artery disease/angina, gum disease and tooth loss.**

**'We all know and it has been accepted that that if you keep your gums healthy, you live longer,' said Dr. David Goteiner, of the Department of Periodontics at the New Jersey Dental School.**

**Goteiner and his team identified 137 patients who suffered heart attacks, unstable angina or angina. The patients medical and dental records were examined and compared to 37 patients who were discharged from the Emergency Department with a diagnosis of chest pain, and another 101 who entered the hospital for elective procedures.**

**The inflammatory gene-known as IL-1-in patients entering the emergency room with acute coronary syndrome or angina was found to be significantly more prevalent in the group aged 60 or older. In addition, gingivitis and periodontitis, infectious inflammatory diseases of the gums and underlying structures of the teeth, were found to be more prevalent in patients diagnosed and admitted with heart complications. It was determined that those patients had not visited a dentist as often as the patients who visited the hospital for elective procedures. The cardiac patients averaged six and a half months since their last dental visit, while patients who entered the hospital for elective procedures averaged three months.**

**The study concluded that patients with acute coronary syndrome and angina are more likely to have poorer oral care, fewer teeth, and bone loss or loss of support as a result of periodontitis or gum disease.**

**'Poor dental care, or a lack of it, may be associated with a cardiac event,' Goteiner said. "It is my hope that the results of this study will not only convince people to regularly visit their dentists, but will also provide physicians with another tool to detect heart disease early so patients can quickly receive treatment.'**