

CLINICAL UPDATE

Probiotics Help Cleft Lip and Palate Orthodontic Patients

Poor oral hygiene and higher incidence of tooth decay are often prevalent in people with cleft lip and palate (CLP). Food supplements containing probiotic bacteria can help reduce the incidence and severity of dental caries. A study of 30 adolescents with CLP analyzed the effects of probiotics on oral health. Fifteen subjects in the intervention group drank a probiotic milk powder containing *Lactobacillus paracasei* SD1 for 4 weeks while 15 subjects in the control group were given milk without a probiotic. Levels of salivary mutans streptococci and lactobacilli were measured at the start of the study and once a week for 4 weeks after use of the probiotic concluded. For adoles-

cents with cleft lip and palate, orthodontic treatment is usually necessary because of irregularities in tooth size, malalignment of teeth, or skeletal abnormalities. However, fixed and removable orthodontic appliances that help correct problems facilitate the colonization of bacteria such as mutans streptococci. This increases the negative impact of orthodontics for caries-susceptible patients. Live microbial food supplements can help to stimulate natural immunity to infection and balance microflora. Use of the probiotic bacteria *Lactobacillus paracasei* SD1 has been shown to have strong inhibitory effects against *Streptococcus mutans*, making it a good

choice as an oral probiotic. In the study, counts of mutans streptococci, which promote tooth decay, were significantly reduced among those pa-

tients. The *L paracasei* SD1 milk powder appeared to successfully colonize the oral cavity among this group of orthodontically treated CLP patients.

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tients who used the probiotic. Likewise, the good bacteria, lactobacilli, showed significant increases among the intervention group. In addition, *L paracasei* SD1 were still detected up to 4 weeks after active usage of the pro-

biotic. It was found to be safe and effective for oral use. Further long-term study of its beneficial effects should be undertaken. (Source: *Cleft Palate-Craniofacial Journal*, May 2014, Volume 51, Number 3)◆

Regulating Immune System Balance

Without regulatory Treg cells (T cells), people would likely die from out-of-control inflammation. T cells prevent the immune system from attacking a person's own cells.

the oral and pharyngeal cancer branch, and colleague at the National Institutes of Health. Via a series of experiments with lab mice, Cl

High-Viscosity Glass Ionomer Restorations and Sealants

New findings suggest that placing high-viscosity glass ionomers as sealants and restorations on load-bearing

of amalgam restorations placed in posterior load-bearing teeth, a large