

PSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS IN PERIODONTAL DISEASE - A REVIEW



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Dr. Vineeta Vaidya

Department of Periodontics
S.D.M. College of Dental Sciences and Hospital,
Dharwad

Periodontal disease is generally considered to be a consequence of an unfavourable host-parasite interaction in which bacteria are the determinants of disease. These pathogenic bacteria express potent virulence factors that invade the surrounding supporting structures. However, the onset and progression of periodontal infections are clearly modified by local and systemic factors that markedly affects the resistance of the host.

The cause may be a bacterium or virus that will not produce clinical manifestations until sufficient causes (often psychosocial) provide the impetus for alteration in the homeostasis of the host. Whether health is maintained or illness supervenes depends upon the environment and the ability of the organism to withstand the stresses. Three components form an etiological matrix for chronic diseases¹³:

1. The virulence of the microorganism or agent.
2. Host resistance or susceptibility.
3. Environmental conditions (social structure, management of emotions, diet, health care, and conflict).

Psychosocial factors are considered as one of the important determinants that diminish the efficacy of the host defense and leads to progression of the disease.