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Tobacco compromises periodontal health in a maintenance population

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Background: Tobacco smoke is recognized as a major risk factor for periodontal disease.

Aim: To examine the clinical features of periodontal destruction in smoking and non-smoking adults with periodontitis on maintenance therapy, in a cross sectional manner.

Subjects and methods: Smoking status was determined by interview, and by salivary cotinine and expired-air carbon monoxide assay, in chronic periodontitis subjects (n=94, mean age 57 yrs). Probing depths and clinical attachment level were used as periodontal disease indices.

Results: Current smokers had deeper pockets and more attachment loss than past and never smokers (both $p < 0.05$). However, no site specific susceptibility to periodontitis levels was noted in the smoking population.

Conclusions: Despite maintenance therapy, smokers experience a greater amount of periodontal attachment loss and deeper probing depths, compared to non-smokers. These results confirm the negative influence of tobacco use on periodontal health and confirm the obligation of oral health professionals to provide patients with tobacco cessation advice and counseling.