



Final Recommendations for the 2024 Consensus on Periodontology in Latin America and the Caribbean

The 2024 Consensus on Periodontology for Latin America and the Caribbean represents a landmark endeavor to systematically address periodontal disease, a significant public health issue impacting millions in the region. Developed through the concerted efforts of expert stakeholders, this consensus aims to unify and enhance periodontal health practices, research, and public awareness, laying out a set of holistic recommendations. These guidelines advocate for standardized methodologies, increased public awareness, and the integration of diagnostic, preventive, and therapeutic practices into general healthcare, alongside a push for research and education to empower dental professionals. By addressing these areas with a focused and collaborative approach, the consensus aims to significantly reduce the burden of periodontal diseases, thereby improving both oral and general health across Latin America and the Caribbean.

1. *Prevalence of Periodontal Diseases*

- **Standardize Examination Methodologies:** Advocate for the adoption of standardized methodologies and case definitions for periodontal disease across epidemiological research studies to ensure comparability and enhance the understanding of disease prevalence and trends. Develop and disseminate a training module for epidemiological surveys including periodontal disease assessment to achieve consistency in periodontal disease assessment across studies, observing WHO guidelines.
- **Establish a Regional Expert Panel:** Form a panel of regional experts tasked with the periodic review and update of case definitions and diagnostic criteria for periodontal diseases, ensuring alignment with global standards while accounting for regional variations.



- **Implement a Standardized Surveillance Framework:** Introduce a standardized framework for periodontal disease surveillance that includes specific indicators for ongoing monitoring and evaluation efforts, aiming to capture accurate prevalence data.
- **Promote Multicenter Studies and Collaboration:** Encourage the development of national oral health surveillance systems and foster international collaborations for multicenter studies. These initiatives will contribute to a deeper epidemiological understanding of periodontal diseases within the region.
- 40 ● **Create a Regional Consortium for Periodontal Research:** Establish a consortium to support resource sharing, methodological alignment, and data pooling. Additionally, launch a database for periodontal health to facilitate collaboration and informed decision-making.
- **Secure Support for Research:** Seek funding and logistical backing for multicenter studies through partnerships with global health organizations, government agencies, and the private sector, aiming to bolster periodontal disease research infrastructure.
- 50 ● **Prioritize Underrepresented Populations in Research:** Increase research efforts targeting underrepresented groups, such as rural and indigenous communities, employing culturally sensitive methodologies to ensure accurate and comprehensive data collection. Develop programs to engage underrepresented populations in oral health research and interventions, enhancing community participation and data collection efforts across diverse demographic groups.
- **Address Socioeconomic and Educational Determinants:** Highlight the need for strategies that address the link between periodontal disease prevalence and socioeconomic as well as educational factors. Advocate for policy reforms that integrate oral health into the broader primary healthcare system, promoting equitable access to care.
- 60 ● **Enhance Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation:** Support the development of a regional oral health surveillance system to continuously monitor



periodontal disease trends and the impact of public health interventions. Encourage the adoption of electronic health records and mobile health technologies for efficient data collection and analysis, aiming to improve the overall management and prevention strategies for periodontal diseases.

2. Burden and Impact of Periodontal Diseases on Oral Health-Related Quality of Life and Systemic Diseases

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- **Expand Epidemiological Research:** Broaden the representation of epidemiological studies across LAC countries to better understand the relationship between periodontal diseases and Oral Health-Related Quality of Life (OHRQoL). These studies should focus on diverse cultural and socioeconomic contexts to provide a comprehensive view of periodontal health impacts.
 - **Longitudinal Studies on Periodontal Health and Systemic Diseases:** Encourage the conduct of multicenter longitudinal studies to investigate the associations and potential causative links between periodontitis and non-communicable diseases (NCDs), such as cardiovascular diseases, diabetes,
80 and respiratory conditions.
 - **Address Vulnerable Populations:** Direct research efforts towards assessing the impact of periodontal diseases on the quality of life among vulnerable groups, including those geographically isolated or with restricted access to dental care, those living in poverty and indigenous populations.
 - **Evaluate the Cost-Effectiveness of Periodontal Interventions:** Conduct intervention studies to assess the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of periodontal treatments in managing or mitigating systemic conditions.
 - **Integrate Oral Health into General Healthcare:** Advocate for the integration of oral health assessments and periodontal disease management into the
90 broader healthcare system. This includes training healthcare providers to recognize the systemic implications of periodontal health and ensuring that oral health is considered an integral part of overall health and well-being.



- **Public Health Programs:** Develop and disseminate targeted public health programs to raise awareness about the significant impact of periodontal diseases on quality of life and its association with systemic conditions.

3. Risk Factors of Periodontal Disease

- 100 ● **Enhanced Training on Risk Factors:** Ensure dental professionals, from their undergraduate training onwards, receive proper training in identifying and managing key periodontal disease risk factors, with a particular emphasis on smoking and diabetes. Dental education curricula should be updated to include in-depth coverage of risk factor management for periodontal disease. This includes training on conducting effective patient interviews and applying current evidence-based practices for risk factor modification.
- 110 ● **Public Awareness Programs and Policies:** Implement widespread public health programs to increase awareness of the significant impact of smoking and poorly managed diabetes on periodontal health. By leveraging various media platforms and targeting both the general public and high-risk groups, these programs can play a crucial role in promoting early intervention and encouraging healthier lifestyles.
- **Integration of Risk Factor Screening in Dental Evaluations:** Advocate for the routine incorporation of risk factor screening for smoking and diabetes into dental evaluations, irrespective of the patient's initial consultation reason. This approach can facilitate prompt and effective preventive and treatment measures.
- 120 ● **Customize Public Health Interventions:** Develop and implement public health interventions that are specifically designed to reduce the prevalence of smoking and improve diabetes management in Latin American and Caribbean populations. Tailored approaches are necessary to address the unique challenges and circumstances of the region.
- **Promote Interdisciplinary Collaboration:** Foster interdisciplinary collaboration between dental professionals and other healthcare specialists,



such as endocrinologists and tobacco cessation specialists, to ensure a comprehensive approach to managing periodontal disease risk factors.

- **Longitudinal Research:** Encourage and support the conduct of longitudinal cohort studies within the region to further elucidate the causal relationships between smoking, diabetes, and periodontal disease.

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4. Enhancing Periodontal Disease Diagnosis

- **Integrate Diagnosis Training in Dental Education:** Incorporate extensive training on periodontal disease diagnosis into dental education curricula, with an emphasis on early detection and application of the AAP/EFP classification. This initiative aims to equip new dental professionals with the knowledge necessary for effective diagnosis from the outset of their careers.
- **Launch Public Awareness Programs:** Execute targeted public awareness programs to raise knowledge about the signs and symptoms of periodontal diseases. Use culturally relevant media channels to ensure widespread outreach and impact, aiming to empower individuals with the knowledge to seek early treatment.
- **Promote Validated Self-report Tools:** Advocate for the use of validated self-report tools in both clinical settings and public health initiatives. These tools are designed to aid in the early recognition of periodontal diseases by patients themselves, facilitating timely professional consultation.
- **Standardize Full-mouth Periodontal Examinations:** Push for the adoption of full-mouth periodontal examinations as the standard diagnostic practice. Emphasize the limitations of partial recordings, which are not sufficient for comprehensive diagnosis and often lead to underdiagnosis.
- **Uniform Application of AAP/EFP Classification:** Encourage the consistent use of the AAP/EFP classification system during periodontal clinical examinations. This practice will ensure accurate staging and grading of periodontitis, enabling the development of individualized treatment plans.

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- **Enhance Understanding of Complementary Diagnostic Tests:** Ensure dental professionals are thoroughly trained in the variety of available diagnostic tests for periodontal diseases, including imaging and laboratory tests. Focus on enhancing the effective application of these tests to improve diagnostic accuracy, according to the existing evidence about these tests.
 - **Support Research on Innovative Diagnostic Methods:** Advocate for ongoing research into innovative methods for periodontal disease diagnosis that offer accuracy and less invasiveness. Promote the adoption of these emerging technologies and tools in clinical practice upon their validation.
 - **Comprehensive Interviews and Multidisciplinary Collaboration:** Provide training for dental practitioners on conducting in-depth interviews to explore systemic and behavioral risk factors for periodontal diseases. Encourage a multidisciplinary approach to care, integrating insights from various health specialties.
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- 170 **5. Strategies for the Prevention of Periodontal Disease and its Impact on General Health**
- **Launch Multifaceted Awareness Programs:** Execute comprehensive programs across community settings like schools, workplaces, and public spaces, employing both traditional and digital media to highlight the risks and systemic health impacts of periodontal disease. Engage local influencers to extend campaign reach and effectiveness.
 - **Develop and Implement Evidence-based Guidelines (EBG):** Formulate CPGs to advocate for periodontal health across all life stages, emphasizing risk management and lifestyle adherence, according to the characteristics of the LAC countries. Involve a broad spectrum of stakeholders in EBG development and ensure accessibility by providing materials in various languages and formats suitable for all literacy levels.
 - **Train Dental Professionals in Patient Communication:** Equip dental professionals with the skills to effectively communicate the connection
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between oral health and overall wellness. Transform dental office waiting areas into educational hubs with resources like videos, brochures, and interactive tools promoting healthy lifestyle choices.

- 190 ● **Support Research on Innovative Health Promotion Methods:** Invest in studies exploring the impact of mobile health applications, tele-dentistry, and social media on oral health awareness and self-care. Focus on assessing how these technologies improve dental care access for marginalized communities.
- **Incorporate Oral Health Education into Community Programs:** Integrate oral health education within schools and community initiatives, offering practical demonstrations on effective oral hygiene practices. Organize health fairs providing free dental screenings and educational workshops to emphasize the significance of oral hygiene.
- **Partner with Dental Product Companies for Resource Distribution:** Collaborate with companies to provide free or affordable oral hygiene products to underprivileged areas. Advocate for the inclusion of oral health products in
200 basic healthcare provisions and ensure the availability of products beneficial for managing advanced periodontal conditions.
- **Emphasize Personalized Oral Hygiene Education:** Stress the importance of tailored oral hygiene instructions in professional development sessions for dental practitioners, catering to the diverse needs of patients including those with special needs.
- **Encourage Longitudinal Studies on Oral Hygiene Effectiveness:** Promote long-term research to evaluate the sustained impact of mechanical and chemical plaque control strategies. Focus on developing and testing oral hygiene products that cater to the region's diverse population and investigating
210 the role of prebiotic diet and probiotics in periodontal health.
- **Develop Integrated Care Programs for Systemic and Oral Health:** Create care models that integrate oral health assessments into routine check-ups for individuals with chronic diseases or during pregnancy. Offer training on the systemic implications of periodontal health to non-dental healthcare providers.



- **Foster a Network for Periodontal Disease Expertise:** Establish a collaboration network among dental and medical professionals to share knowledge, research findings, and educational resources on periodontal and systemic health interrelations.
- 220 ● **Build Partnerships with Patient Associations:** Work with patient organizations to spread information about periodontal disease prevention and its connection to systemic health, customizing educational materials for diverse community needs.
- **Support Interdisciplinary Research on Preventive Strategies:** Back multicenter studies examining the effectiveness of periodontal disease prevention measures and their impact on systemic health, aiming to inform comprehensive public health policies and clinical guidelines.

6. *Treatment of Periodontal Diseases*

- 230 ● **Integrate Comprehensive Care in Treatment Plans:** Incorporate a holistic care model in periodontal treatment that combines risk factor management with a mix of non-surgical and surgical interventions. Ensure a strong emphasis on Supportive Periodontal Care (SPC) to maintain oral health and prevent the recurrence of disease.
- **Strengthen Patient Engagement in Treatment:** Boost patient involvement in their periodontal health by focusing on biofilm control and mitigating risk factors. Promote a partnership between patients and dental professionals to achieve and sustain periodontal health, utilizing patient education and motivation strategies that are culturally appropriate and multidisciplinary.
- 240 ● **Incorporate Adjunctive Therapies Wisely:** Encourage healthcare providers to judiciously integrate adjunctive therapies into periodontal care according with the available evidence. Recommend the careful selection of adjunct treatments like local antiseptics and antibiotics as supplements to mechanical plaque control and subgingival instrumentation when conventional methods are insufficient.



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- **Tailor Supportive Periodontal Care (SPC) Programs:** Develop personalized SPC programs that consider the connection between oral and systemic health and focus on enhancing patient adherence. Adjust these programs to meet the diverse cultural, socioeconomic, and literacy levels of the population, ensuring they are accessible and relevant to patients.
- **Update Dental Education and Practice:** Advocate for the modernization of dental education and practice across Latin America and the Caribbean to align with contemporary, evidence-based periodontal care approaches. Emphasize affordable and practical interventions that cater to the regional socioeconomic conditions, and foster continuous professional development for dental practitioners.
- **Advocate for Comprehensive Public Health Policies:** Push for the development and enhancement of inclusive public health policies that address periodontal disease as part of the wider oral and general health agenda. These policies should focus on preventive care, timely intervention, and the integration of periodontal health services into the primary healthcare framework, enhancing access for marginalized communities.

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In summary, the 2024 Consensus on Periodontology articulates a comprehensive strategic approach designed to tackle the significant public health challenge posed by periodontal diseases in the region. By addressing the critical areas of disease prevalence, effects on oral health-related quality of life, systemic health correlations, and risk factors alongside diagnostic, preventive, and therapeutic measures with clear, actionable strategies, the consensus lays a solid foundation for significant enhancements in periodontal health across the region. Moreover, it aims to mobilize clinical and policy decision-making processes, ensuring that these strategies are effectively implemented. Its successful execution depends on the persistent, concerted efforts of dental practitioners, researchers, educators, and policy makers, all working in unison towards the common goal of ensuring all individuals within the region have equitable access to effective periodontal prevention, diagnosis, and treatment.

