



## Healthier Smile: The Role of Diet and Nutrition in the Prevention and Therapy of Oral Diseases

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### Message from the Guest Editors

Dear Colleagues,

Although oral hygiene and fluorides have a significant impact on everyone's oral health, we must not forget that the causes of oral diseases are often related to malnutrition and other unhealthy behaviors, such as smoking. While dental caries is clearly a diet-related disease, there is also growing evidence that gingivitis and periodontitis are greatly influenced by diet. A peculiarity in this context is that malnutrition with far too much sugar and pro-inflammatory fats and a lack of fiber and micronutrients (which is also what the average Western diet represents) shows up extremely quickly in oral diseases. These develop much more quickly than other diseases also caused by Western diets, such as obesity, diabetes, or atherosclerosis. This in turn presents a great opportunity for dentists and physicians to use nutritional dentistry to initiate healthier diets early on before other secondary diseases manifest themselves—an opportunity for which solely plaque control and fluorides are inadequate.

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