

Assessing Dental Practitioners' Awareness of Celiac Disease and Treatment Modalities

Objectives: To test the knowledge of dentists, auxiliary staff, and dental school faculty members and students, regarding their awareness of celiac disease and the potential role they could play in the referral for diagnosis of celiac disease positive patients. To gauge the effectiveness of a lecture on celiac disease and the role of the dental practitioner.

Methods: Two lectures were held: one for Massachusetts dentists and auxiliary staff and one for Tufts University School of Dental Medicine (TUSDM) faculty and students. All attendees of the 2018 Wide Open Golf and Tennis Tournament (lecture one), and TUSDM faculty and select students (lecture two), were invited to attend. Before the lecture, participants were given a pre-survey testing their baseline knowledge of celiac disease and their perception of the role of the dental practitioner in its diagnosis and treatment. The survey consisted of 12 knowledge questions and 2 perception questions. After the lecture, a post-survey was given to measure gain in knowledge and change in attitudes towards their role in caring for celiacs. Out of approximately 50 attendees, 12 completed both surveys. Differences between the survey administrations were evaluated via the Wilcoxon signed rank test.

Results: After the lecture, two Likert scale questions used to gauge participants' attitude toward and confidence in dental practitioners' role in diagnosing celiac disease demonstrated participants felt significantly increased importance of and confidence in screening patients for celiac disease ($p < 0.05$). Knowledge questions showed a lack of knowledge in the pre-survey and significant improvement for total correct questions in the post-survey ($p = 0.004$).

Conclusions: Celiac disease is not well understood within the dental community. Following the lecture, participants were more aware of the role the dental practitioner can play in identifying oral manifestations and symptoms of celiac disease and gluten disorders to assist in prompt referral of patients to physicians.

Division: IADR/AADR/CADR General Session

Meeting: 2019 IADR/AADR/CADR General Session (Vancouver, BC, Canada)

Location: Vancouver, BC, Canada

Year: 2019

Final Presentation ID: 1519

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Financial Interest Disclosure: NONE

SESSION INFORMATION

Poster Session

Salivary Gland, Oral and Systemic Conditions

Thursday, 06/20/2019 , 03:45PM - 05:00PM

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