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Prevotella intermedia, an orthodontic point of view

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Abstract

Introduction: Prevotella intermedia is a gram-negative obligate anaerobic bacterium that participates in the development of periodontal disease and is present in the bacterial biofilm of patients with fixed appliances.

Objective: To analyze the literature on virulence factors, diagnostic methods, treatment and relationship with other diseases of Prevotella intermedia in orthodontic patients.

Methodology: Articles on the subject published in the databases PubMed, EBSCO, Scopus, and Web of Science with publication dates in the last 5 years were analyzed. The search was carried out with the keywords: "Prevotella intermedia", "dentistry", "orthodontics", "virulence factors", "diagnostic methods", "treatment" and "systemic diseases".

Results: INP A protease is one of the most important virulence factors of the bacterium. The type of orthodontic appliance influences the alteration of the patient's subgingival microbiota and PCR is the most commonly used method for the detection of these microbial agents. Scaling and root planning remain the most effective treatment for periodontal disease. The presence of Prevotella intermedia may aggravate systemic diseases present in patients.

Conclusions: The biofilm of microbial agents in orthodontic patients favours the development of periodontal disease, due to the retentive areas of fixed appliances. It is therefore essential to maintain good oral hygiene, especially during orthodontic treatment.

Keywords: Prevotella intermedia, orthodontics, virulence factors, diagnostic methods, treatment, systemic diseases

1. Introduction

Prevotella is a group of anaerobic, gram-negative bacilli characterized by similarities in phenotype [1].

Prevotella intermedia (P. Intermedia) is one of the main periodontopathogens, part of the orange complex, which is the group of bacteria most closely related to periodontitis. The literature shows that its colonization is manifested by the presence of enlarged periodontal pockets [2, 3, 4].

Periodontitis is an inflammatory-infectious disease that is induced by subgingival biofilm and host response, initiated by bacterial colonization, including P. intermedia [3, 5]. This disease can be associated with systemic conditions, including adverse pregnancy outcomes, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes mellitus, respiratory disorders, fatal pneumonia in hemodialysis patients, chronic kidney disease and metabolic syndrome [6, 7].

Regarding the orthodontic area, fixed appliances that are used for the correction of malocclusions influence the oral microbiota with an increase in the counts of Streptococcus mutans, Lactobacillus spp and in the percentage of potentially pathogenic gram-negative bacteria. This bacterial increase is caused by the accumulation of dental plaque in fixed appliances and its virulence factors, orthodontic treatment can cause anything from mild transient gingival inflammation to periodontitis [7].

P. Intermedia is present in large numbers during orthodontic treatment. At present, there are not enough review articles to evaluate the consequences of this bacterium in orthodontic

therapy, therefore, the aim of this article is to review and analyze the literature about *P. intermedia* in orthodontic treatment, particularly the virulence factors, methods of diagnosis and treatment; as well as, the relationship of the bacterium with other diseases.

2. Materials and Methods

Articles on the subject published through the PubMed, Scopus and Google Scholar databases were analyzed, with emphasis on the last 5 years. The quality of the articles was evaluated using guidelines, i.e., identification, review, choice and inclusion. The quality of the reviews was assessed using the measurement tool for evaluating systematic reviews. The search was performed using Boolean logical operators AND, OR and NOT, with the keywords: "Prevotella intermedia", "dentistry", "orthodontics", "virulence factors", "diagnostic methods", "treatment" and "systemic diseases".

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Virulence Factors

P. intermedia expresses a 90 kDa cysteine protease called interpain A (inpA) that oxidizes and subsequently degrades haemoglobin, releasing heme, which is a requirement for the growth, survival and virulence of this bacterium [8]. Adhesion, competition with surrounding microbes and horizontal gene transfer are the main driver of *Prevotella intermedia* evolution [9].

Virulence factors of periodontal pathogens, including *P. intermedia*, stimulate the secretion of inflammatory cytokines, causing chronic systemic inflammation [10]. Estradiol was found to significantly increase the bacterial dipeptidyl peptidase IV enzyme activities of the eight *Prevotella* strains, this being a virulence factor contributing to the pathogenesis of pregnancy-related gingivitis [11]. The virulence genes *inpA*, *csxA*, *fadA* and *bspA* have potential effects on cellular gene expression in patients with oral squamous cell carcinoma [12].

P. intermedia and *P. Nigrescens* have highly dynamic genomes, strains at sites of infection release virulence factors related to the synthesis of capsules, lipopolysaccharides, secretion systems, proteinases and toxins. *P. intermedia* nucleases allow evasion of host neutrophil extracellular traps, which increases its pathogenicity [13, 14].

Periodontal pathogens in general have a wide variety of virulence factors such as lipopolysaccharides, fimbriae and proteases, which allow them to infect periodontal tissues. This is why *P. intermedia*, *Fusobacterium nucleatum*, *Treponema denticola* and *Campylobacter rectus* can cause mild and transient gingival inflammation during fixed appliance treatment [7].

The production of viscous polysaccharides (EPS) is considered one of the major virulence factors, however, they have been shown in experimental practices with rats to cause abscess formation [3].

P. intermedia presents multiple virulence factors such as proteases, enzymes, lipopolysaccharides, fimbriae and toxins that help to invade and infect humans, being INP A protease one of the most important factors of the bacterium. This bacterium is associated with periodontal diseases such as gingivitis, which is frequently seen in patients undergoing orthodontic treatment.

3.2 Diagnostic methods

The association between periodontitis and cardiovascular disease is partially mediated by the immune response of

periodontal pathogens, including *P. intermedia*, *Aggregatibacter actinomycetemcomitans*, *Porphyromonas gingivalis*, *Porphyromonas endodontis*, *Tannerella forsythia*, *C. Rectus* and *Fusobacterium nucleatum*, this was determined by DNA-DNA hybridization [15].

Through bacterial culture, PCR-based evaluation, hybridization techniques, pyrosequencing and transcriptomic analysis, *A. actinomycetemcomitans* and *P. intermedia* have been detected in peri-implantitis biofilms compared to healthy implants [16].

Real-time polymerase chain reaction (qPCR) helps to detect periodontal pathogens including *P. Gignivalis*, *A. actinomycetemcomitans*, *T. Forsythia*, *Treponema denticola* and *P. intermedia* in the microflora of periodontal pockets and gingival fluid [17, 18].

Internal LiPA has a high specificity and sensitivity for detecting major periodontal pathogens. In one study, LiPA and PCR diagnostic methods were performed, and no remarkable differences were observed [19]. The presence of bacteria in deep pockets of patients with periodontitis has been confirmed by anaerobic culture and nucleic acid amplification [20]. There is an in-office bacterial test (CST) that can detect *P. intermedia* and other typical periodontal pathogens, with a somewhat lower sensitivity than qPCR, which can be classified as "good" [21].

The "OralDisk" test includes bacterial DNA extraction, purification and detection by hydrolysis probe qPCR of ten periodontal pathogens, including *P. intermedia*. Comparison of this test with the laboratory reference method reveals 90% agreement between targets detected as positive and negative [22].

In one study, deboned brackets and aligners rinsed after 30 days of use were stored and processed for analysis with checkerboard DNA-DNA hybridization. *Fusobacterium periodontium* and *P. intermedia* were found in higher percentages in the fixed labial appliance, and microbial contamination in metal brackets was higher than in aligners [23]. The type of orthodontic appliance influences the subgingival microbiota, which is why the total bacterial load was determined by qPCR, which increased in the fixed appliance group and was maintained in the aligner group [24].

In another study, brackets were collected from maxillary and mandibular central incisors after being deboned and adhesions of *A. Actinomycetemcomitans*, *P. Gingivalis*, *P. intermedia*, *Fusobacterium nucleatum* (*F. Nucleatum*) and *T. forsythia* were determined by qPCR [25].

Conclusion: Currently, there are several methods that help us to detect the presence of *P. intermedia* in the oral cavity of patients, however, real-time polymerase chain reaction is the most complete, reliable and widely used method for the detection of periodontal pathogens. The type of orthodontic appliance influences the alteration of the patient's subgingival microbiota, with aligners being the most hygienic of all.

3.3 Treatment

Scaling and root planing (SRP) is the standard non-surgical procedure for periodontal disease, the focus is on removing bacterial deposits and reversing the inflammatory process [26].

Lascufloxacin has high efficacy against *S. pneumoniae* and *P. intermedia*, for the treatment of pneumonia [27]. Treatments of systemic metronidazole 400mg plus amoxicillin 500mg and antimicrobial photodynamic therapy (aPDT) significantly improved the effects of SRP in smoker patients with periodontitis [28]. Similarly, aPDT promotes additional clinical

benefits in uncompensated diabetic patients [29]. It has been reported that 1000 μ A of direct current can kill *P. Gingivalis* and *P. Intermedia* by promoting the overproduction of reactive oxygen species [3]. A high pulse power neodymium-doped yttrium aluminium garnet laser monotherapy before the surgical protocol of periodontal treatment reduces almost 60% of periodontal pathogens of the red/orange complex [30].

The use of probiotics in pregnant patients helps to reduce inflammatory indices; and they function as very good adjuvants to periodontal therapy, reducing *P. Gingivalis*, *T. Forsythia*, *T. Denticola*, *P. Intermedia* and *A. Actinomycetemcomitans* [1, 31]. Within the diversity of oral probiotics, *Weissella cibaria* CMU and CMS1 inhibit biofilm formation by reducing bacterial species and *Limosilactobacillus fermentum* ALAL020 shows higher antibacterial activity against *P. gingivalis* and *P. Intermedia* [32, 33].

Chlorhexidine at 0.12% and ethanolic extract of propolis type 3 at 3% decrease the count of gram-negative and positive microorganisms [34]. Tetracycline hydrochloride dissolved in distilled water, saline and 2% lidocaine with epinephrine is used as an antiseptic adjuvant for inhibition of *F. Nucleatum*, *P. Intermedia* and *P. Gingivalis* [35].

The application of orthodontic appliances makes oral hygiene difficult and increases plaque accumulation, which often leads to gingival inflammation, especially lingual appliances, followed by labial appliances and finally aligners [23, 36].

P. intermedia levels decreased 13 weeks after fixed appliance debonding [37]. Photodynamic therapy as an adjunct to SRP helps to improve clinical gingival parameters in adolescent patients undergoing orthodontic treatment with fixed appliances [38].

SRP is the most effective treatment for periodontal diseases; however, there are effective adjuvants such as 0.12% chlorhexidine rinses, 3% ethanolic extract of propolis, oral probiotics, among others, to complement this treatment. Orthodontic patients experience alteration of microbial agents, so it is of vital importance to maintain good oral hygiene.

3.4 Relationship of *Prevotella Intermedia* with other diseases

Alteration of the gut microbiota composition by orally derived periodontal pathogenic bacteria is the causative mechanism for the relationship between periodontitis and liver disease [39]. *P. intermedia* may influence cognitive impairment in Alzheimer's disease, as it can trigger pathological changes in the brain that resemble and/or induce the accumulation of A β peptides and promote tau hyperphosphorylation [40]. A study detected that a high rate of periodontal pathogens such as *A. actinomycetemcomitans*, *P. intermedia* and *Fusobacterium* spp in patients with chronic generalized periodontitis significantly increases the risk of coronary artery disease [41].

P. intermedia and bacterial species associated with periodontal disease are enriched in the supragingival microbiota of women with suboptimal vaginal communities, so there is a relationship between oral and vaginal dysbiosis [21]. During pregnancy, there is the growth of some pathogenic bacteria, including *A. actinomycetemcomitans*, *F. Nucleatum* and selective growth of *P. Intermedia*, *P. Gingivalis* and *T. Forsythia*, because these bacteria use progesterone as a source of nutrition, which favours the development of periodontal disease [1, 42].

In patients with oral squamous cell carcinoma, the diversity of oral bacteria was found to be significantly higher in tumour

sites than in normal patient tissues [43].

P. Gingivalis, *T. Forsythia* and *P. Intermedia* are involved in the pathogenesis of rheumatoid arthritis, as these are often detected in the synovial fluid of these patients [10]. Elevated levels of *P. intermedia* have also been found to be associated with the presence of severe asthma and impaired thyroid function [44, 45].

P. intermedia is mainly found in the oral cavity, however, it is associated with various systemic diseases. Because of this, it is of utmost importance to pay attention to the maintenance of good oral hygiene to avoid the aggravation of these diseases.

4. Conclusions

P. Intermedia is one of the main periodontopathogens involved in periodontal disease. This gram-negative anaerobic bacterium presents virulence factors that allow it to infect humans. It has been found mainly by means of qPCR that *P. intermedia* and other pathogens favour the development of gingivitis in patients with fixed appliances; SRP being the most effective treatment to treat this condition; there are several coadjuvants methods such as oral probiotics that in patients with orthodontics would be very useful to maintain good oral hygiene. The presence of *P. intermedia* in patients with other diseases can aggravate their systemic condition.

5. Conflict of Interest

Not available

6. Financial Support

Not available

7. References

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