

# Inflammatory Gum Disease Influences Heart Attack Severity

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The extent and severity of inflammatory gum disease is closely related to heart attack severity, new research published in the *Journal of Dental Research* suggests.



Researchers from the University of Granada in Spain determined that chronic periodontitis extent and severity was related to serum levels of 2 biomarkers indicating heart tissue death. To do so, the investigators analyzed 112 myocardial infarction (MI) patients who underwent cardiologic, biochemical, and periodontal health checks and tests, including for serum cardiac troponin I and myoglobin levels that are associated with MI necrosis.

“Chronic periodontitis appears as a death risk factor, and it plays an important role in the prognosis of acute MI,” said study co-author Francisco Mesa Aguado in a press release.

However, follow-up checks are needed to monitor for any new coronary events, cardiac failure, or death among the participants, the researchers noted.

“If that happens to be the case, chronic periodontitis should be considered as a predictor in the development of MI, and be therefore included in the risk stratification scores,” Aguado said.

Previous research determined that patients with [diabetes might be at greater risk for periodontal disease](#), in addition to having a higher risk for cardiovascular problems. However, those studies did not examine the associations among diabetes, periodontal disease, and cardiovascular risk.

Meanwhile, separate studies [examining dental care and cardiovascular disease risk](#) have had inconsistent results, though several suggested a moderate correlation between poor dental care and cardiovascular disease risk. Despite those findings, [the American Heart Association rejected connections between gum disease and cardiovascular disease](#) in a December 2012 statement.