

Obesity may be linked to gingival bleeding

Obesity may be linked to a higher risk of gingival bleeding, highlighting the importance of considering a patient's overall health, not just their oral condition, according to a study published in *Obesity Medicine*.

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Obesity may be linked to a higher risk of gingival bleeding, highlighting the importance of considering a patient's overall health, not just their oral condition. This research was recently published in *Obesity Medicine*.

Though obese patients appeared to show a higher prevalence of bleeding gums than those with a normal body mass index (BMI), there was no significant link in those considered overweight, the authors wrote.

"These results suggest that obesity, rather than overweight, is associated with increased gingival inflammation," wrote the authors, led by Luiz Alexandre Chisini of the Federal University of Pelotas in Brazil ([*Obes Med*](#), November 30, 2024, Vol. 52, 100568).

Obesity and being overweight are well-known risk factors for various health issues, including periodontal diseases. This study aimed to explore whether obesity and overweight are associated with a higher prevalence of gingival bleeding, a marker of periodontal inflammation, they wrote.

This study analyzed data from 2,089 university students ages 18 to 24 in Southern Brazil in 2016 using a self-administered questionnaire. Gingival inflammation was assessed by asking students whether their gums bleed when they brush their teeth.

BMI was calculated from self-reported height and weight, classified per World Health Organization criteria: normal (< 25), overweight (25-30), and obesity (> 30). A Poisson regression model examined the association between BMI categories and gingival bleeding prevalence, they wrote.

Gingival bleeding was more common among non-white individuals, those with depressive symptoms, high stress levels, and those who had not visited a dentist in the past year. Obesity was significantly associated with a higher prevalence of gingival bleeding.

In the crude analysis, individuals who were obese had a 32% higher prevalence of gingival bleeding (prevalence ratio [PR] = 1.32; 95% confidence interval [CI], 1.16-1.49), while overweight status showed no significant link. This association persisted after adjustment, with obese individuals still showing a 32% higher prevalence (PR = 1.32; 95% CI, 1.17-1.49), while overweight status remained unassociated, they wrote.

The study, however, had limitations. Its cross-sectional design

could establish whether obesity causes gingival bleeding. Longitudinal studies are needed to examine the causal relationship by tracking gingival health and obesity over time, the authors added.

"To practice a personalized and adequate dental treatment, it is necessary to evaluate the patient as a whole, also taking into account his systemic and physical condition, not just his oral cavity," Chisini et al concluded.
