Abstract: Introduction: Nutrition affects oral health and oral health affects nutrition. This interdependent relationship sees good nutritional health, promoting good oral health and vice versa. On the other hand, poor nutritional health is associated with poor oral health and vice versa. Methods and materials: A search was performed using keywords "malnutrition" and "oral health" to identify the current literature. The related articles were searched in databases including IDL, google scholar and Medline from 2007 to 2011. Results: Several reports emphasize the synergistic relationship between malnutrition, infectious diseases and the immune system; for example, infections promote malnutrition, the malnutrition elicits dysfunctions of the immune system, and this impaired immunity intensifies the infectious disease. Malnutrition is also characterized by increased production and secretion of stress hormones (glucocorticoids) and decreased secretion of insulin. Elevated circulating levels of cortisol in malnutrition imply a similar change in the content of this hormone in saliva and gingival fluid. Elevated circulating glucocorticoid levels, even at physiological concentrations, elicit macrophage dysfunction and reduce the production of cytokines in response to inflammatory stimuli. Cytokines play a prominent role in growth, differentiation, host defenses and tissue damage. Cytokines also inhibit chemokines and other cells involved in attracting inflammatory cells at the site of inflammation, which ultimately impact the tissue healing process.

Key words: Malnutrition, oral health

Presentation: Poster