

Original

Association of Smoking Status with Oral-health-related Daily Life Difficulties among Japanese Male Workers

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Abstract: The purposes of this study were: 1) to examine the association of the smoking status with oral-health-related daily life difficulties of workers, 2) assess employees' opinions and knowledge on tobacco, and 3) explore the necessity of smoking-cessation support activities as part of an oral health program in the workplace. The subjects of this study were 855 male office or technical workers, who work for an electronics company. The mean age was 42.1. A questionnaire survey and oral examinations were conducted from September 2004 to August 2005. The questionnaire items included: 1) oral health behavior, 2) oral-health-related daily life difficulties (five items), and 3) tobacco-related questions. The results showed that the prevalence of smokers was 38.7%, ex-smokers 12.9%, and non-smokers 48.4%. The common oral-health-related daily life difficulty questions showed that 20.6% of subjects felt uncomfortable esthetically, followed by having chewing and tasting (13.7%), speaking and pronunciation (10.1%), work-related (6.1%), and sleeping (3.5%) difficulties. The logistic regression analysis showed an association between the smoking status and oral-health-related daily life difficulties: esthetic problems (OR for smokers=1.60), chewing and tasting difficulties (OR for smokers=2.03, and OR for ex-smokers=1.98), and difficulty in sleeping (OR for smokers=4.01). About a quarter of the employees answered that smoking-cessation support was inadequate, and 29.3% reported the necessity of smoking-cessation support by dental professionals in the company. Knowledge about tobacco-related diseases (oral cancer; 67.1%, and periodontal disease; 54.6%) was insufficient. These results showed the close association of the smoking status with oral-health-related daily life difficulties of male workers, and the necessity of smoking-cessation support for and provision of information on tobacco to male employees. Therefore, dental professionals should provide smoking-cessation support as a part of oral health promotion in the workplace.

Key words: Oral health promotion in the workplace, Smoking-cessation, Oral-health-related difficulties

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