

## *Dental Currents Chapter 5*

### **Health Care Trends**

The understanding of dental disease has changed remarkably over the last several years. We now know that bacteria, while an irritant to our body, do not actually cause dental breakdown. Our body's own inflammatory system, when it can not be managed properly, actually causes the disease symptoms and damage like periodontal disease and dental decay.

The Oral Care Report is a periodical sponsored by Colgate and sent to every dentist. The editor is Dr. Chester Douglass, a professor at Harvard School of Dental Medicine. In a recent issue, he reports on this "Health Care Trend". Here are some quotes from his article

***“Over the past 10 years, several oral conditions, particularly periodontal diseases, have been associated with cardiovascular conditions, preterm low birth weight, and diabetes.”***

***“The most important of these recent findings is the identification of the shared risk factors between the oral and systemic disease processes.”***

***“..because of the commonality of these oral disease risk factors and those of cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and other systemic disorders, when we control one set of risks we control the other.”***

***“..oral inflammatory processes are not limited to the oral cavity, they are part of whole body processes.”***

***“Dental care providers have a clear obligation to make sure that their patients know their risk factors for periodontal disease, and that these risk factors can also contribute to cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and a host of other maladies. Failure to control these risk factors will put our patients at increased risk for systemic disease.”***

***“..risk assessment and disease management must become a core function of the dental practice ... for the patient's oral and systemic well-being.”***

Your role is to take the responsibility to make it happen. Have you eaten 5-10 servings of fruits and vegetables today? Have you exercised? Have you taken a potent multivitamin/mineral/antioxidant with omega 3's? Have you flossed and brushed your teeth? Did you get enough sleep and minimize stress?

**Your health is our concern and your responsibility.**