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**Group:**

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**Pathology Question:**

Is there an increased risk of caries while wearing an RPD?

**Report:**

Removable partial dentures replace one or more missing teeth and have clasps that wrap around healthy abutment teeth for support, stability and retention of the removable partial denture. These clasps can be made of acrylic or metal. RPDs can increase the build up of plaque around the abutment teeth which could lead to caries.

In the journal article “Wearing of removable partial dentures in relation to dental caries”, a cross sectional study was done among 5028 dentulous adults. Some of these adults wore one partial denture, some two, and some none. The study revealed that those with two RPD’s had more caries. However, those with only one RPD had only a slight increase of caries compared to those without a RPD. This could be due to the fact that those without a RPD have more teeth and thus more tooth surfaces to get caries compared to someone with less teeth and who wears a RPD. Since a RPD is a device that accumulates plaque on tooth surfaces, the overall conclusion was that dentist should make all the efforts to promote good oral hygiene habits and regular dental visits among those who wear a RPD.

In the journal of prosthetic dentistry, “The influence of removable partial dentures on the level of streptococcus mutans in saliva” Dr Mihalow discusses the changes in saliva in patients who receive a RPD. The study included 5 men and 6 women with ages ranging from 30 to 73 years. Saliva samples were obtained before a RPD insertion, 1 month after insertion and 6 months after. The results concluded that the amount of streptococcus mutans had significantly increased after RPD insertion. As we know strep. Mutans cause caries.

The motivation and knowledge of RPD wearers to maintain a good level of oral hygiene is extremely important to maintain the health of the remaining teeth. There is an elevation in plaque accumulation and the amount of streptococcus mutans in the saliva so frequent dental visits are very important. Proper oral hygiene instructions should be given verbally and in writing to help these RPD wearers.

**References:**

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