

S03-2 Effects and management of odontogenic infections on pulmonary infections

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Carious and periodontal disease is strongly associated with pulmonary infections. Aspiration pneumonia often develops lung abscess and/or empyema, and sometimes leads to death in elderly patients. It is often repeatedly seen in most of elderly patients, which leads to general weakness, prolonged bed rest, and several complications.

There are two pathophysiological factors for aspiration pneumonia. One is due to odontogenic infections: aspirated oral microorganisms reach pulmonary alveoli, grow, and develop their pathogenicity. The other is host factors: alcoholism, diabetes, or bedridden status reduces cough reflex, airway clearance, and functions of phagocytes.

The prevention of aspiration pneumonia is significant from medical, social, and economical viewpoints, although the main management of pneumonia is antimicrobial chemotherapy. "Oral care" has been recently of interest as a control means for odontogenic infections and aspiration pneumonia. A dental hygienist and speech therapists in our hospital have implemented active intervention in oral care of patients with risk of aspiration pneumonia, which has made considerable achievements.