

Periodontal Disease and Breast Cancer—Response

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We appreciate the data provided by Drs. Lehrer, Green, and Rosenzweig (1) regarding ecological associations of breast cancer death rates and reported tooth loss from decay or gum disease among adults over the age of 65 years. In our article (2), we examined breast cancer incidence; we did not examine prognosis

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References

1. Lehrer S, Green S, Rosenzweig KE: Periodontal disease and breast cancer—letter. *Cancer Epidemiol Biomarkers Prev* 2016;25:863.

or mortality. Furthermore, the exposure measure they used was different from our measure of reported diagnosis of periodontal disease; theirs focused on tooth loss including loss to decay.

As they note, their findings need to be cautiously interpreted given that it is not known whether individuals in that survey with tooth loss are the ones who are dying of breast cancer. Furthermore, confounding by other factors, which they were not able to control, might also impact the findings.

We concur that further research regarding the interplay between chronic disease of the oral cavity and incidence and mortality from other systemic diseases including breast cancer is warranted.

Disclosure of Potential Conflicts of Interest

No potential conflicts of interest were disclosed.

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2. Freudenheim JL, Genco RJ, LaMonte MJ, Millen AE, Hovey KM, Mai X, et al. Periodontal disease and breast cancer: prospective cohort study of postmenopausal women. *Cancer Epidemiol Biomarkers Prev* 2016;25:43–50.