Evolving concepts of inflammation and oral disease: Have we met the enemy, and is it us?

There is a chicken and egg question in oral health: Which is the cause of oral disease, the inflammatory response of the host (us) to the insult (invading pathogens, chemicals and treatments), or the pathogens, chemicals and treatments themselves? We know that different people have different inflammatory responses to the same pathogens and chemicals, and we know that systemic diseases, such as adult diabetes, may heighten the inflammatory response to insult. In this presentation, we consider the insult and inflammatory response of certain disease conditions: osteonecrosis of the jaw (BRONJ), lichen planus, and mucositis related to head and neck cancer radiation treatment. So, is it the host’s inflammatory response that is a trigger to disease? And is it the host’s inability to contain microbial overgrowth in the oral microbiome that is a trigger to disease? In short, have we met the enemy, and is it us? Proper home oral care and regular professional visits can overcome our own inability to fully resist disease. Requirements for effective home oral care are reviewed in light of emerging research on sources on insult and inflammatory response.

Biography

James L Ratcliff is the Chairman of the Board and CEO of Rowpar Pharmaceuticals, Inc., Scottsdale, AZ, maker of the Dentists Choice and ClōSYS brands of oral care products. In 2014, Rowpar received the US Small Business Administration’s Exporter of the Year Award. From 1989 to 2000, he served as a Senior Research Scientist, Professor and Director, Center for the Study of Higher Education at the Pennsylvania State University. From 1979 to 1989, he was professor and program head for higher education at Iowa State University. He is the author of 120 articles, books, book chapters, is co-inventor on over 24 patents. He is an active member of the Arizona Biotechnology Assn., American Academy of Oral and Systemic Health, American Education Research Assn., and the International Association for Dental Research. He holds a PhD degree in Higher Education from Washington State University, a MA degree in History from Washington State University, and a BA degree from Utah State University.

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