



ORAL HEALTH CONDITIONS OF THE OLDER PEOPLE

Disco
Dipartimento di
Scienze Cliniche
Specialistiche ed
Odontostomatologiche

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INTRODUCTION

The aging population is an extraordinary demographic transformation that for several decades interested Western countries, especially Italy, upsetting a consolidated social equilibrium. According to 2011 data elaborated by ISTAT, over the past decade, the average life of the Italians has increased significantly, reaching about 79.1 years for men and 84.3 for women. The aging people can present a wide variety of oral problems such as loss of teeth, edentulism, periodontitis, caries, oral mucosal lesions, use of incongruous dental prostheses (either partial or complete), and among other. These oral problems can affect the general health causing pain, reducing nutrient intake, and depressing quality of life. However, the information currently available regarding the oral health of elderly people is poor, especially in Italy, where has been conducted little research on this issue. Thus, the aim of this preliminary study was to determine the prevalence of oral and dental diseases in elderly patients in the city of Ancona.

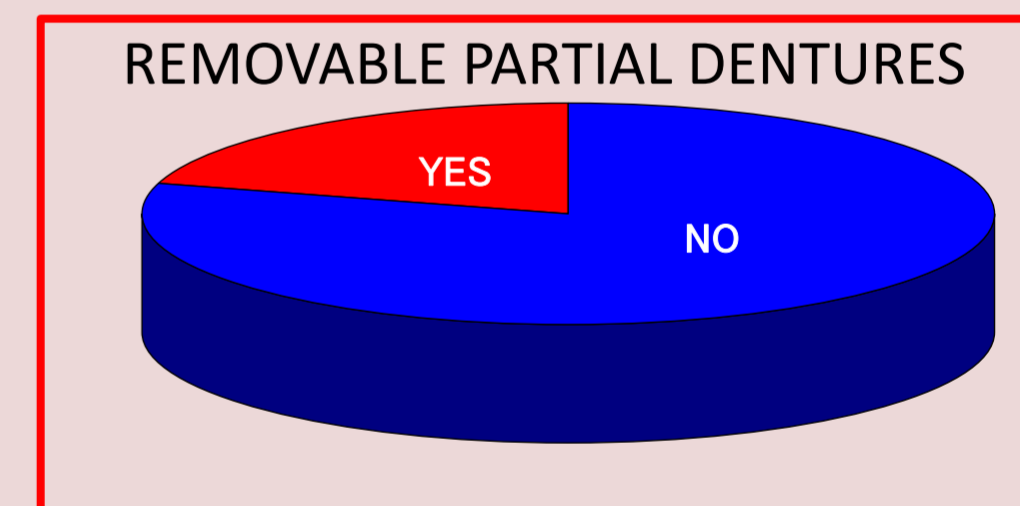
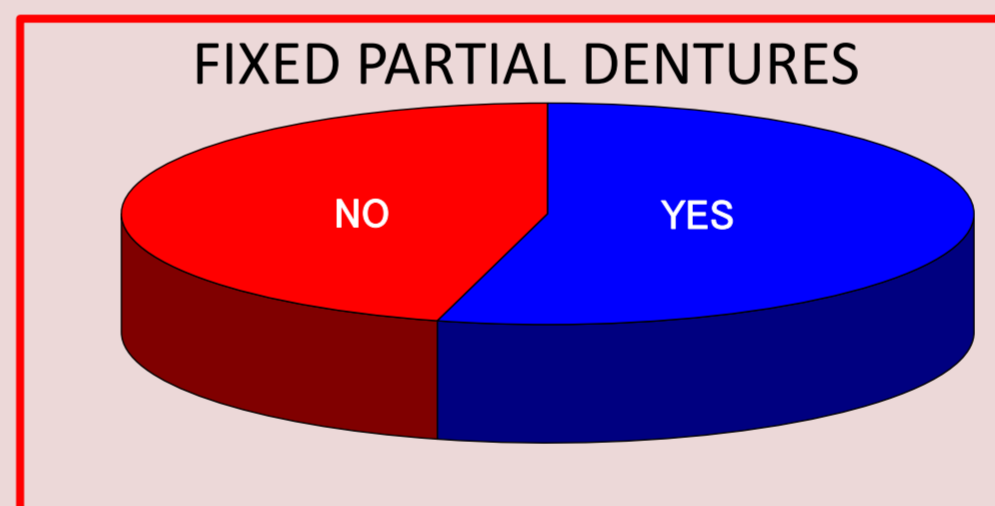
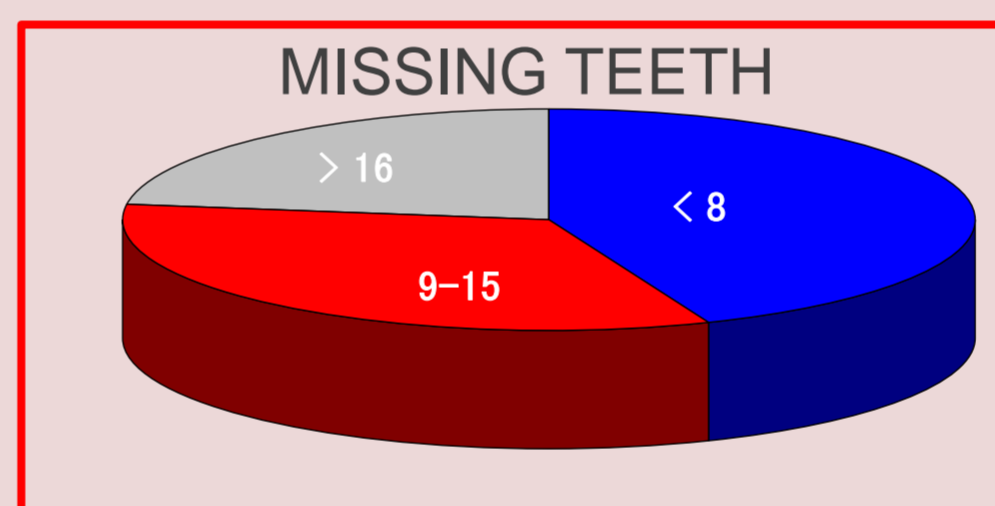
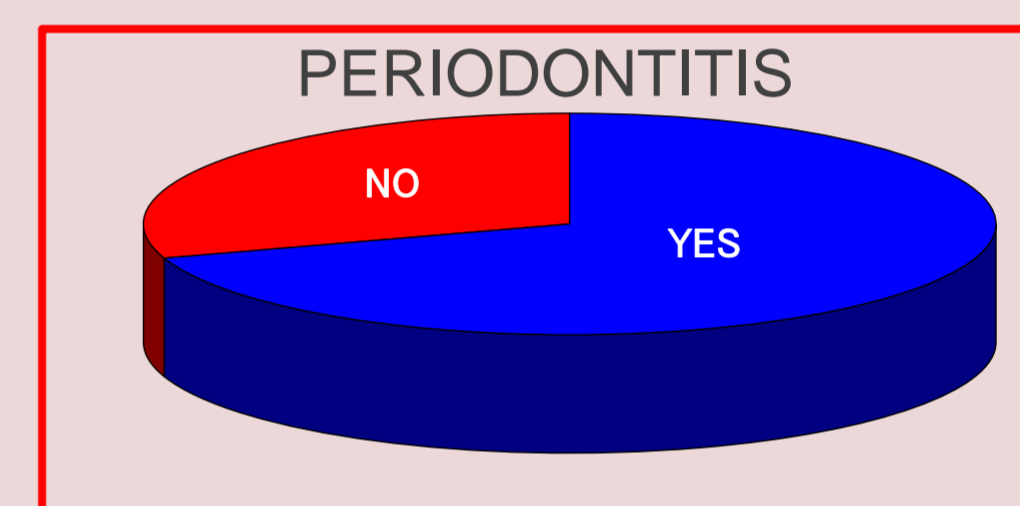
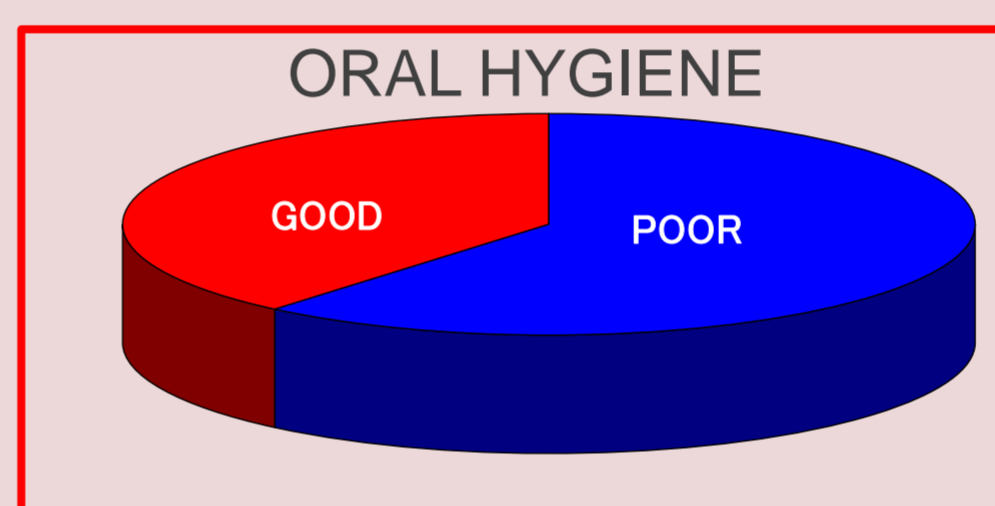
MATERIALS AND METHODS

124 elderly subjects aged between 65 and 95 years were recruited for this study. The specific medical/dental record, designed for older people, was used to collect data and was divided into three parts. The first part lists the patient's demographics. The second part was devoted to general medical history. The third part includes the dental history and the dental visit. As regards the oral conditions, injury to the soft tissues, degree of oral hygiene, presence of caries, periodontal diseases, missing teeth, presence of the prosthesis, and presence of xerostomia, were annotated.

RESULTS

In this study 124 patients were examined, 66 were males and 58 females, all aged between 65 and 95 years with a peak incidence between 70-80 years. The most prevalent medical condition was hypertension (64.5%). 74.2% of the examined population took up to 3 drugs/day, while the 25.8% more than 3 drugs/day. As regards the soft tissues, only 9.6% of patients had lesions on soft tissues. Only 33.3% had

sufficient oral hygiene. The prevalence of periodontitis was 74.1% and 45.1% of patients suffered decayed teeth. As regards the missing teeth, the 44% of patients had fewer than 8 missing teeth, the 33.4 % had the number of missing teeth including between 9 and 15, and 22.6% had more than 16 missing teeth. Only 7 patients were completely edentulous both upper and lower. The results of this study showed that the 32.3% of the patients had fixed partial dentures, 17.7% had removable partial dentures, 22.6% had both fixed partial dentures and removable partial dentures, 4% removable total dentures and 23.4% don't have dentures. Only 29.1% patients had xerostomia.



DISCUSSION

Ageing is a process that causes homeostasis disequilibrium, increased vulnerability, in addition to reduced adaptation to environmental stimuli. Ageing exerts various effects on oral tissues and function both directly (e.g. caries, periodontitis, xerostomia, oral candidiasis) than indirectly. In fact ageing is often associated with systemic disorders, that can influence oral health and functions. Preventive oral health is necessary to improve nutritional intake, masticatory function, general systemic health and quality of life.



Di chi sara' il mondo di domani?
Di chi oggi canta in coro.

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IL Di.S.C.O. SI RACCONTA