





Photo: Periodontal disease

among First Nations and Inuit, with 57% of adults smoking daily compared with only 31% of Métis adults and 20% of non-Aboriginal Canadian adults (FNIGC, 2012b; Tait, 2009; Métis Centre, 2011).

Uncontrolled diabetes and poor oral hygiene are also risk factors for periodontal disease (Genco, 1996; University of Maryland Medical Center, 2011). Type II diabetes is 3-5 times more prevalent among First Nations people and is increasing among Inuit, putting them at greater risk for periodontal disease (Health Canada, 2012). Also noteworthy is the fact that poor oral health can affect diabetes management (Gillis, 2010).

Other risk factors for periodontal disease include osteoporosis, obesity, genetic factors, stress, and low socioeconomic status (Genco, 1996; University of Maryland Medical Center, 2011). Local factors such as tooth position or the use of partial dentures or orthodontic appliances can also affect the status of the periodontium by causing build-up and retention of plaque (Clerehugh, Tugnait, & Genco, 2009; Darby & Walsh 2010).

## Prevention and Treatment

The most effective way to prevent and manage periodontal disease is through regular home care and professional

maintenance. Daily flossing between the teeth and twice daily toothbrushing will help to control build-up of plaque. Regular care by a dental professional is also recommended. The First Nations and Inuit Health Branch provides dental care through the Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) program. NIHB are available to all registered First Nations and Inuit in Canada. The dental benefits include regular exams and cleaning as well as, periodontal and other services (Health Canada, 2013). Despite the insurance coverage, 41% of Aboriginal people have not seen a dentist in the past year (Lawrence, 2010).

## For More Information

- **Canadian Dental Association**  
[www.cda-adc.ca/en/oral\\_health](http://www.cda-adc.ca/en/oral_health)
- **BC Dental Association**  
[www.bcdental.org/Dental\\_health](http://www.bcdental.org/Dental_health)
- **BC Dental Hygienists' Association**  
[www.bcdha.com/?page\\_id=23](http://www.bcdha.com/?page_id=23)
- **Health Canada – Dental Benefits – First Nations and Inuit Health**  
[www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/nihb-ssna/benefit-prestation/dent/index-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/nihb-ssna/benefit-prestation/dent/index-eng.php)

## References

- Canadian Dental Association (2013). Your oral health. Retrieved January 12, 2013 from [http://www.cda-adc.ca/en/oral\\_health/index.asp](http://www.cda-adc.ca/en/oral_health/index.asp).
- Clerehugh, V., Tugnait, A., & Genco, R.J. (2009). Periodontology at a glance. United Kingdom: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Darby, M.L., & Walsh, M.M. (2010). Dental hygiene theory and practice (pp. 267-282; 306). Missouri: Saunders Elsevier.
- Genco, R.J. (1996). Current view of risk factors for periodontal diseases. *Journal of Periodontology*, 67(10 Suppl): 1041-9.
- Gillis, M.R. (2010). A place for oral health in diabetes management. *Journal of the Canadian Dental Association*, 76(2):a24. Retrieved March 25, 2013 from <http://www.jcda.ca/article/a24>
- Health Canada (2009). Summary report on the findings of the oral health component of the Canadian Health Measures Survey 2007-2009. Ottawa, ON: Ministry of Health.
- Health Canada (2012). Diseases and health conditions – First Nations and Inuit Health. Retrieved February 15, 2013 from <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/diseases-maladies/index-eng.php>.
- Health Canada (2013). Dental benefits – First Nations and Inuit Health. Accessed February 15, 2013 from <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/nihb-ssna/benefit-prestation/dent/index-eng.php>.
- Health Canada, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, Nunatsiavut Government, Inuvialuit Regional Corporation, and Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami. (2011). Inuit oral health survey report 2008-2009. Ottawa, ON: Health Canada.
- Lawrence, H.P. (2010). Oral health interventions among Indigenous populations in Canada. *International Dental Journal*, 60(3): 229-234.
- Métis Centre, National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO) (2011). Respiratory health of Métis adults: Findings from the 2006 Aboriginal Peoples Survey. Ottawa, ON: Métis Centre. Retrieved February 28, 2013 from [http://www.naho.ca/documents/metiscentre/english/2011\\_respiratory\\_health\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.naho.ca/documents/metiscentre/english/2011_respiratory_health_factsheet.pdf)
- Newman, M.G., Takei, H.H., Klokkevold, P.R., & Carranza, F.A. (2012). Carranza's clinical periodontology (pp. 244-246). Missouri: Saunders Elsevier.
- Tait, H. (2009). Smoking among Inuit in Canada – findings from the 2006 Aboriginal Peoples Survey. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada, social and Aboriginal Statistics Division, presentation to the National Inuit Tobacco Task Group.
- The First Nations Information Governance Centre. (2012a). Report on the Findings of the First Nations Oral Health Survey (FNOHS) 2009-10. Ottawa, ON: The First Nations Information Governance Centre.
- The First Nations Information Governance Centre. (2012b). First Nations Regional Health Survey (RHS) Phase 2 (2008/2010). National report on adults, youth and children living in First Nations communities. Ottawa, ON: The First Nations Information Governance Centre.
- University of Maryland Medical Center. (2011). Periodontal disease risk factors. Medical Reference. Baltimore, MD: University of Maryland Medical Center. Retrieved April 9, 2013 from [http://www.umm.edu/patiented/articles/who\\_gets\\_periodontal\\_disease\\_000024\\_4.htm](http://www.umm.edu/patiented/articles/who_gets_periodontal_disease_000024_4.htm)



NATIONAL COLLABORATING CENTRE  
FOR ABORIGINAL HEALTH  
CENTRE DE COLLABORATION NATIONALE  
DE LA SANTÉ AUTOCHTONE

FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA  
3333 UNIVERSITY WAY, PRINCE GEORGE, BC V2N 4Z9

1 250 960 5250  
NCCAH@UNBC.CA  
WWW.NCCAH-CCNSA.CA