New bacterial species found in human mouth

Scientists have discovered a new species of bacteria in the mouth. The finding could help scientists to understand tooth decay and gum disease and may lead to better treatments.

"The healthy human mouth is home to a tremendous variety of microbes including viruses, fungi, protozoa and bacteria," said Professor William Wade from King’s College London Dental Institute. "The bacteria are the most numerous: there are 100 million in every millilitre of saliva and more than 600 different species in the mouth. Around half of these have yet to be named and we are trying to describe and name the new species."

Scientists studied healthy tissue as well as tumours in the mouth and found three strains of bacteria called Prevotella that could not be identified. Prevotella species are part of the normal microbial flora in humans and are also associated with various oral diseases and infections in other parts of the body. The researchers named the new species Prevotella histicola; his-ticola means ‘inhabitant of tissue’.

"Interestingly, this species was isolated from within the oral tissues, both in oral cancers and normal, healthy tissue," said Professor Wade. "This confirms other work showing that oral bacteria can invade both tissues and individual cells."

Tooth decay and gum disease are the most common bacterial diseases of man and are caused by changes in the microbes normally present in the mouth. To understand these diseases better, scientists first need to know which bacteria are present in human mouths. Understanding the composition of the oral micro-biota will also help scientists devise new prevention measures and treatments for oral diseases.

"A detailed description and name for each species of bacteria are needed so that different laboratories can recognise all of the bacterial species present in the mouth," said Professor Wade.

Doctors return to Iraq

BAGHDAD – A kidney specialist who fled Iraq’s bombings, kidnappings and sectarian killings 20 months ago has reported back to work at his Baghdad hospital - one of some 800 doctors who have returned over the summer.

Doctors are just a tiny group among Iraq’s more than 4 million refugees and displaced, but Iraq’s health minister says his homing sends a message to other emigrés that security has “improved dramatically.”

He mostly sleeps at his workplace, Baghdad’s Surgical Institute. "I am really excited by the prospect of having some of my best work judged by some of the leading dentists in the business," Dr. Habbab said. "My technicians and I are discussing which of our cases to submit and which of the categories to enter.

"However, I would love to be competing for the top award."

The Smile of the Year award judges include top industry professionals such as Dr. Christopher Orr, one of the founding members of the British Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (BACD), Dr Neil Cournihan of Eleven Orthodontics and award-winning beauty journalist, Alice Hart-Davis.

Qatar dentist lured by UK smile awards

At least one regional dentist will be competing in next year’s U.K. Smile Awards contest.

Dr. Majid Habbab, who owns a private clinic in Qatar, is striving to meet the November 50th deadline for entry into the London-based competition next March.

There are ten categories in which dental professionals can compete, including sections such as best orthodontic smile, restorative smile, facial reconstruction and aesthetic techniques. However, all the entrants will be chasing the coveted Smile of the Year award, which is chosen by the judges from the winning cases in each category.

Tonguing has a new meaning

ATLANTA: Researchers at the Georgia Institute of Technology have developed a tongue-driven control system to help disabled people to manipulate devices like wheelchairs. The system consists of a magnet and sensors that track the movements of the tongue and send it to a receiver.

Flossing is good for you

LEIPZIG: A new study by the New York University has demonstrated that including flossing as part of one’s oral care routine can actually help reduce the amount of gum disease-causing bacteria found in the mouth. The study examined 51 sets of twins between the ages of 12 and 21.

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