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The clinical efficacy of wooden interdental cleaners in gingivitis reduction.

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Abstract

Seventy-seven subjects completed a 6-week clinical study designed to determine the effectiveness of wooden interdental cleaners in reducing gingivitis severity, using a recently developed diagnostic technique, the Interdental Bleeding Index. After a baseline examination, all subjects were given a medium toothbrush for use during the duration of the study. No instruction in toothbrushing technique was given. After 14 days, subjects were reexamined, and two balanced groups were formed. One group was instructed to use wooden interdental cleaners once a day in addition to brushing. The other group continued with just their regular toothbrushing, thus serving as the control group. A final examination of gingival bleeding sites was conducted at the end of 6 weeks. The improvement in the gingival health, as measured by the Interdental Bleeding Index was 8.8% in the brushing-only group, and 52.2% for the group using the wooden interdental cleaners as a supplement to brushing. This represents a highly significant ($p < 0.0001$) incremental benefit realized by the use of wooden interdental cleaners in addition to toothbrushing to reduce gingival inflammation. With proper instruction, the Interdental Bleeding Index could be a valuable tool for dentists and dental hygienists, as well as a patient-motivating device for monitoring gingival health.