

Isolation of *P. corporis* from oral cavity: What is the role of this bacterium in the mouth and other parts of the human body?

Sir,

The aim in this letter to editor is to discuss the possible role of *Prevotella corporis* of oral origin in infectious diseases of oral cavity. Since I first isolated this organism in 1998 there has been no work that has focused on this area of research. After nearly 10 years I would like to draw your attention once more to this problem and ask: Is there any role for *P. corporis* in oral infections?

Prevotella (Bacteroides) corporis was originally known as *Bacteroides melaninogenicus* subspecies *intermedius* and was later reclassified as *Bacteroides corporis*.^[1] Subsequently, *B. corporis* and several pigmented moderately saccharolytic species of *Bacteroides* (including *B. intermedius* and *B. melaninogenicus*) and nonpigmented species (including *B. buccae*, *B. bivius*, *B. buccalis*, *B. disiens*, *B. heparinolyticus*, *B. oralis*, *B. oris*, *B. oulorum*, *B. ruminicola*, *B. veroralis*, and *B. zooglyphiformans*) were transferred to a new genus, *Prevotella*.^[2] Since then *B. corporis* has been known as *Prevotella corporis*.^[3-5] Whereas black-pigmented anaerobic bacteria such as *Porphyromonas gingivalis* and *Prevotella intermedia* are known to be involved in periodontal disease, not much is known of the oral prevalence or role of *P. corporis*.^[3,4,6] However, a few strains of *P. corporis* have been isolated from dental root canal infections.^[7]

P. corporis is typically isolated from nonoral sites^[3-6] but the isolates examined in my study were isolated from periodontal pockets of patients with periodontitis who had been referred to Manchester Dental Hospital's University, Dental Hospital's Periodontic Unit. Although *P. corporis* has occasionally been isolated from infected dental root canals in the past,^[7] the role of this species in different types of periodontal and other diseases is still not well understood. There is no published study that has identified *P. corporis* as one of the black pigmented species of the genus *Prevotella* found in the oral cavity.^[8-10] Therefore, no one knows the role of this bacterium in oral infections. More work needs to be done to find out the role of this bacterium in human infection, particularly in infections of the mouth.

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