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JAPANESE STUDY FINDS THAT ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCES OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC COULD LEAD TO ORAL HEALTH INEQUALITIES

Study is Published in *JDR Clinical & Translational Research*

Alexandria, VA – May 10, 2022 — Researchers in Japan have found that economic hardships brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic may lead to oral health inequalities; the study, COVID-19 Effects on Income and Dental Visits: A Cross-sectional Study, was [published today](#) in *JDR Clinical & Translational Research*.

An online, self-reported cross-sectional survey about health activities, including dental visits, during the first COVID-19 state of emergency was conducted in Osaka, Japan (June 23 to July 12, 2020).

Among participants with toothaches, the assessment for the association between ‘refrained from visiting a dentist despite wanting treatment for toothache during the state of emergency (refrained treatment)’ and income changes before and after the state of emergency using a multivariate Poisson regression model was adjusted for sex, age, self-rated health, frequency of regular dental visits, and employment status.

Among 27,575 participants, 3,895 (14.1%) had toothaches and 1,906 (6.9%) reported that they refrained from seeking treatment. Among people with decreased incomes (n=8,152, 29.6% of overall participants), the proportions of the refrained treatment group were 8.0% (income decreased by 1–49%), 9.9% (50–99% decreased), and 9.1% (100% decreased).

Among participants with toothache, after adjusting for all variables and compared with participants with no income change, we observed significantly higher prevalence ratios (PRs) for refrained treatment in those who experienced a decreased income owing to COVID-19.

The authors concluded that decreased income was associated with refrained dental treatment during the COVID-19 state of emergency in Osaka, Japan. The economic damage related to the COVID-19 pandemic could lead to oral health inequalities.

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About the *JDR Clinical & Translational Research*

The *JDR Clinical & Translational Research* is a quarterly publication. This peer-reviewed journal is dedicated to publishing original dental, oral and craniofacial research at the interface between discovery science and clinical application with the translation of research into healthcare delivery systems at the individual patient, clinical practice and community levels. The *JDR CTR* has been accepted for inclusion in MEDLINE. Follow the *JDR CTR* on Twitter [@JDRClinTransRes](https://twitter.com/JDRClinTransRes).

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