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Title: Gingival bleeding is related to respiratory health

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Body: Background The relationship of dental and respiratory health is not well known. An association of periodontitis with systemic diseases is reported in several studies, while literature about dental health dental and obstructive lung diseases is scarce. Aims To investigate whether dental health, assessed as oral hygiene and gingival bleeding, is related to respiratory health, assessed as self-reported respiratory symptoms and COPD. Methods A postal questionnaire including questions about respiratory and dental health was sent to general population based samples (N=13.361) in seven Northern European centres. 3253 participants reported gingival bleeding when brushing teeth always, often or sometimes. Logistic regressions with adjustment for age, smoking, social class, centre and gender were used. Results Gingival bleeding was significantly associated with wheeze OR 1.48, CI 1.32-1.66), tightness in chest (OR 1.79, CI 1.57-2.05) and COPD (OR 1.68, CI 1.28-2.20). Conclusions Gingival bleeding is significantly associated with respiratory symptoms. One might speculate whether this is mediated by direct or indirect effect of aggressive oral pathogens or imbalance of oral microbiome.

