Classification of periodontal diseases: history, present and future

Abstract

Classification of periodontitis patients has been a challenge throughout the last 100 years. Historically, the classification of periodontal disease has been directly linked to the available knowledge about the clinical symptoms and the pathogenesis of the disease. Thus, throughout the years and parallel to the development of knowledge, disease classification has evolved and has been adapted several times. Currently, the internationally accepted classification system is the one proposed by Armitage (1999). However, also other disease classification systems have been proposed aiming for an easier clinical applicability (Van der Velden 2000). Despite the efforts, classification remains an issue of controversy and all the different proposed systems present advantages and shortcomings. New knowledge of the disease etiology and pathobiology, as well as contemporary bioinformatics techniques, could contribute to the improvement of the current classification systems.

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