

CURRENT TRENDS AMONG PATIENTS WITH PERIODONTAL DISEASE¹

AUGUST 2013

In April 2013, OraPharma conducted a survey of more than 300 adult patients with periodontal disease. This survey is the third in a series to track new trends and changing attitudes among different subsets of patients with periodontal disease.

SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

This survey's results identified four key patient themes in direct response to specific questions:

- Perception of urgency in a dental professional's recommendation results in a higher rate of treatment acceptance
- General understanding of infection as the underlying cause of periodontal disease has trended lower among patients surveyed
- "Active infection" is a term that would encourage immediate action
- Direct language about potential consequences of periodontal disease can motivate the patient to accept a dental professional's recommended treatment

The findings below reveal insights about your patients with periodontal disease, which may help you to better inform your patients and provide more positive clinical outcomes.

IMPACT OF THE ECONOMY

While economic conditions in the US appear to be improving, patients surveyed don't feel as optimistic. Only 23% felt the economy has improved in the last 2 years.

With continuing economic worries, a significant share of patients with periodontal disease may want to put off dental visits and other necessary treatment. In fact, 52% of those who felt worse about the economy indicated they would likely put off dental work. So, it is helpful for patients with periodontal disease to understand the importance of returning for their regularly scheduled maintenance appointments and their dentist's recommended treatment plan.

PERCEPTIONS OF MESSAGE URGENCY

As results indicated in our 2012 survey, the urgency with which a treatment recommendation is delivered is a significant factor for acceptance. In fact, 2013 results indicate a direct impact on a patient's treatment decision.

Patients are more likely to receive treatment when they perceive the recommendation from their dental professional as having been delivered with urgency. Almost 63% of patients treated said they received an urgent message to treat, while only 48% of those who had not received treatment indicated they received an urgent message to treat. ^{Fig. 1}

Delivering a message to treat with an emphasis on urgency may increase treatment acceptance among patients.

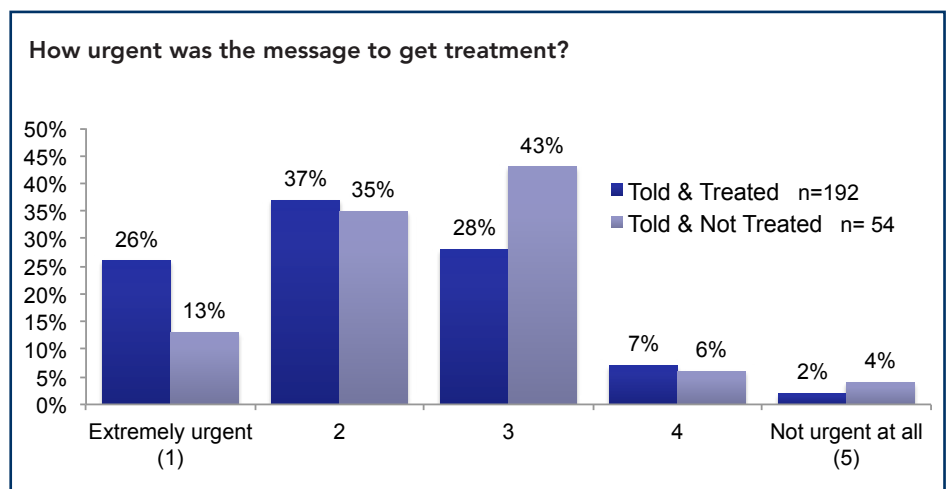


Fig. 1

INFECTION AS A COMPONENT OF PERIODONTAL DISEASE

Consistent with the findings from 2012, patients remain knowledgeable about some aspects of their oral health, but data suggests there's still confusion when it comes to the cause of their periodontal disease.

When asked how well they understand the role of infection in periodontal disease, only 38% indicated they clearly understand its role or cause. This is a downward trend from the 2012 result of 48%.^{Fig. 2}

Patient education is an important component of a dental professional's treatment recommendation. It appears from the survey results that the better a dental healthcare professional explains periodontal disease, the more likely a patient is to move forward with a treatment recommendation.^{Fig. 3}

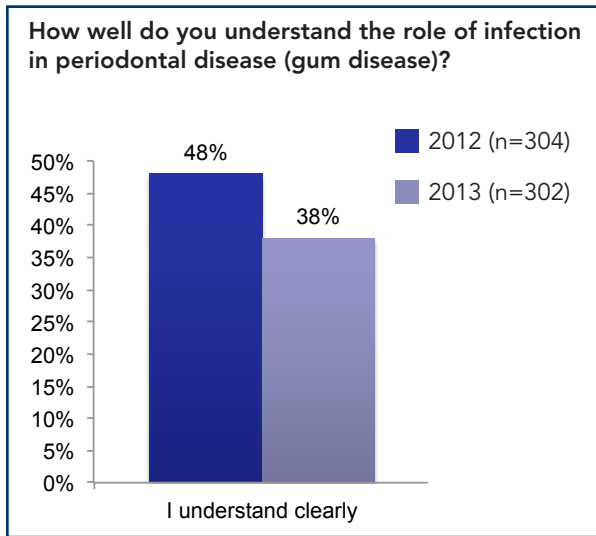


Fig. 2

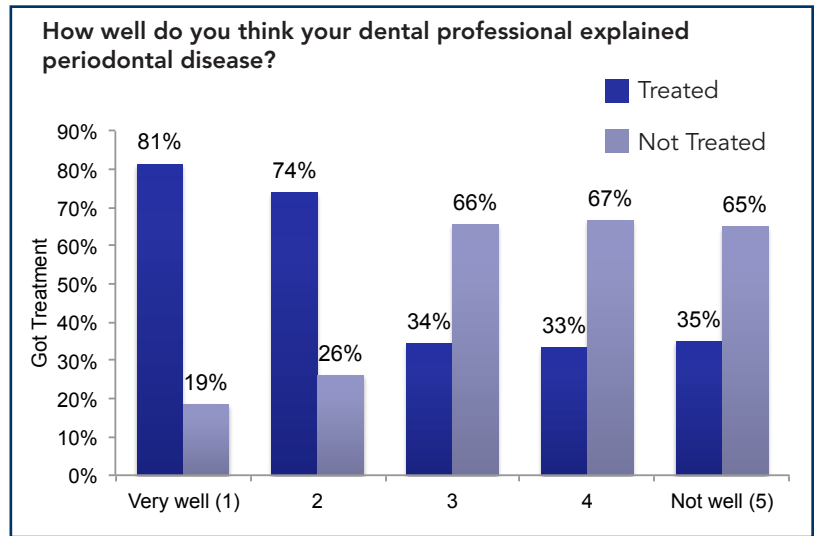


Fig. 3

THE IMPACT OF LANGUAGE ON PATIENT MOTIVATION

With a lower overall understanding among patients of the role of active infection in periodontal disease, there's a need for more direct explanation of the disease and treatment options during in-office discussions.

The term "active infection" proved very motivating to patients surveyed. When this language was used, 76% of patients indicated it would be important to go to the dentist immediately.^{Fig. 4}

Among patients who had been diagnosed but not yet treated, 73% indicated it would be important to get immediate treatment if they knew they had an active infection in their mouth.^{Fig. 5}

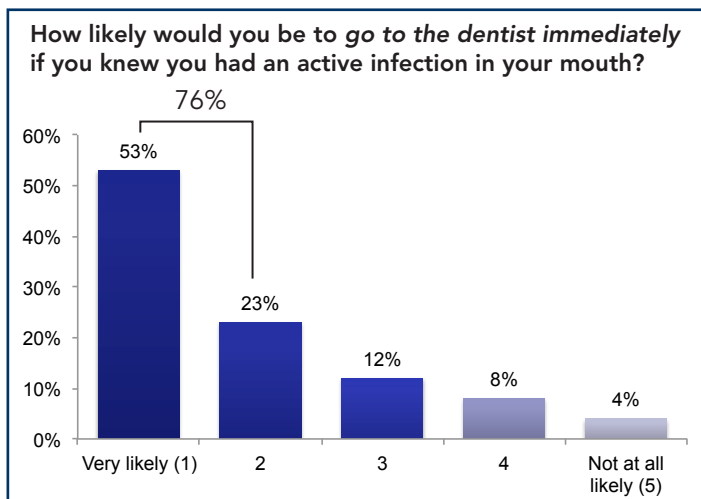


Fig. 4

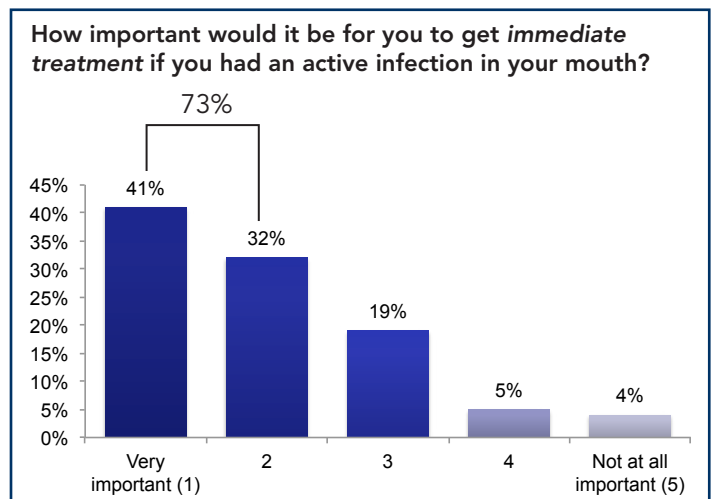
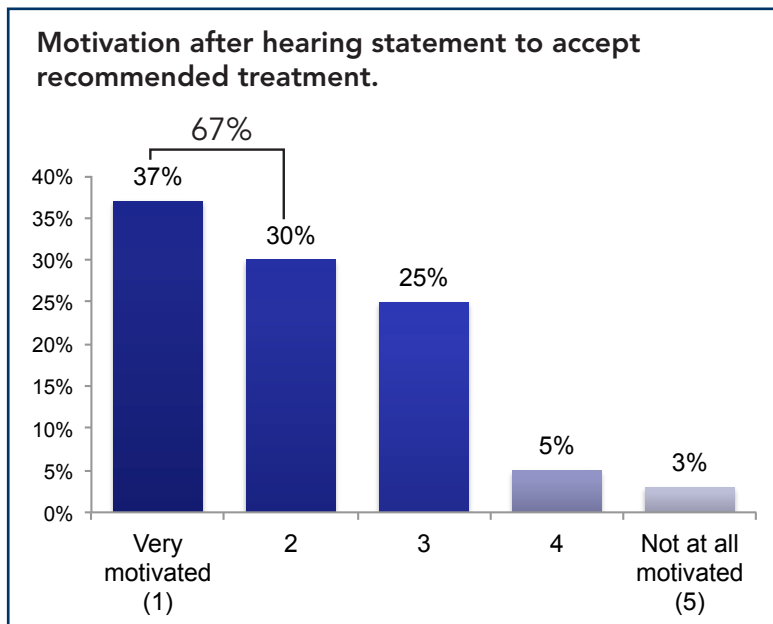


Fig. 5

67% of patients indicated they would be motivated to accept their dentist's or hygienist's recommended treatment after having periodontal disease explained like this: ^{Fig. 6}



“Periodontal disease (gum disease) is a chronic bacterial infection that can lead to irreversible damage to the gums and bones supporting your teeth if not treated properly. A comprehensive treatment that includes a locally administered antibiotic (LAA), when indicated, is recommended to kill the harmful bacteria left behind, even after a deep cleaning.”

Fig. 6

In fact, 58% of patients who have *not yet been treated* indicated they also find this language motivating.

Not only does more descriptive language carry importance, but communication approaches do as well. Of patients surveyed, 82% want to be provided with all treatment options, as well as a direct and authoritative recommendation, in order to make an informed decision.

IMPLICATIONS FOR DENTAL GROUP PRACTICES (DGPs)

There are important data points in this report that can be passed on to the practitioners in your practices.

In summary:

- The connection is strong between urgent recommendations and acceptance of treatment
 - Almost $\frac{2}{3}$ of patients who have been treated perceived an urgent message to treat
- Patients need a deeper understanding of periodontal disease cause
 - Only 38% of patients surveyed clearly understand the role of infection
- Direct language that includes “active infection” is highly motivating
 - 76% of patients surveyed would go to the dentist immediately
 - 73% of patients not yet treated would seek immediate treatment

This information could help shift patients with periodontal disease from “wait and see” to “take action.”

REFERENCE: 1. Data on file. OraPharma, Inc. Bridgewater, NJ; 2013.

©OraPharma, Inc. 2013 A-1555-13 07/13

***ora*PHARMA**