

Original Article

Comparative evaluation of a herbal mouthwash (Freshol) with chlorhexidine on plaque accumulation, gingival inflammation, and salivary *Streptococcus mutans* growth

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Abstract

Introduction: Plaque accumulation and oral microorganisms are the main predisposing factors to various orodental infections and targeting these, therefore, can prove to be an effective way of combating these diseases. Herbal extracts have been of particular interest these days owing to various side effects associated with conventional modes of treatment. **Aims and Objectives:** The present study was conducted to compare the efficacy of a commercially available homeopathic mouthwash with chlorhexidine on plaque status, gingival status, and salivary *Streptococcus mutans* count. **Materials and Methods:** Total sample of 55 children, aged 8-14 years, were randomly divided into two groups. Group A (35) and Group B (20) were given 10 mL of test mouthwash "Freshol" and chlorhexidine respectively during phases 1 and 3 of the clinical trial which was of 10 days each. Phase 2 of 14 days in between was the washout period during which no mouthwash was given. **Result:** Freshol was found to be better than chlorhexidine in reducing the salivary mutans streptococci count and equieffective to chlorhexidine in altering plaque and gingival scores. **Conclusion:** Herbal alternatives can prove to be an effective and safe alternative to conventional modes of treatment.

Key words: Chlorhexidine, gingival status, herbal mouthwash, plaque status, *Streptococcus mutans*

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