

Anthropology in Contemporary Dental Medicine: A Review

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Background. The evolution of the dental medicine and the anthropology has resulted in the emergence of new theories to explain the etiology and pathogenesis of some oro-dental anomalies and dental diseases. The anthropological elements implied in the onset of oro-dental anomalies are as follows: phylogenetic evolution, dental arch parameters, post-eruption changes, teeth loss patterns, cultural factors. Considering the role of genes in the onset of the development of teeth (position, number, shape), various orofacial syndromes are influenced by a combination of genetic, environmental and cultural factors. The knowledge of the basic anthropologic elements by the dental practitioner could contribute to an early diagnosis of these anomalies and early start of an effective therapy related both to anatomical and functional components.

Conclusions. By focusing on the anthropological factors, the dental practitioners can perform more effectively the primary or secondary prevention as well as the amelioration of the stomatognathic system disorders. A complex personalized preventive and therapeutic approach must include pharmacogenomics approaches, familial transgenerational and cultural factors counselling, as well as modern measurement and analysis of the alveolar bone parameters and post-eruptive changes.

Key words: oro-dental anomalies, genetic factors, environmental factors, cultural factors, anthropology