

## **Hyaluronic Acid in Persistent Periodontal Pockets**

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The initiation, progression, and recurrence of periodontal diseases has always been thought to be a simple plaque induced infection. However while plaque is still considered to be important as an aetiological agent in the initiation of periodontal diseases, clearly some people are more susceptible and react more vigorously to the toxic irritants it produces.

Research is emerging indicating that it is not so much the presence of dental plaque, but the host reaction to it that is the problem. This tendency to overreact to plaque irritants seems to be as a result of an inherited genetic predisposition to develop the more destructive forms of periodontal diseases. Also the aetiology of periodontal diseases is increasingly seen as multifactorial, with social factors such as smoking, stress, and lifestyle playing a major part in the pathogenesis of periodontal diseases.

As a result the management of periodontal diseases has become more complex, and not limited to simple mechanical bebridement of root surfaces as in the past. Topical and systemic pharmacological adjuncts are increasingly being used to improve treatment outcomes. Pharmacological products are broadly divided into 2 groups: antimicrobials and anti-inflammatories. Increasing interest in anti-inflammatories is evident as the realisation that not only must plaque be eliminated, but the immune system needs to be managed more effectively to reverse the destructive processes and promote healing.

Gengigel (hyaluronan) is the only product on the market that can be topically applied to promote healing and suppress the destructive inflammatory process that characterises periodontal diseases. So, in those patients with persistent periodontal pockets that will not heal, or are susceptible to recurrent periodontal diseases, or can never quite achieve periodontal health, this product is of great benefit. Increasingly it is being used not only during the active treatment phase, but during the long-term maintenance phases of maintenance of periodontal patients.