

Report on the 19th IAGG World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics

- Relationship between Saliva and Oral Health

WATARU SAKAMOTO, M.D.

Institute of QOL,
Fuji Women's University

MITSURU OZAKI, M.D.

Reimeikai-Kitade Hospital

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The 19th IAGG (International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics) World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics was held in Paris, France, from July 5th to 9th, 2009. The slogan of the congress was “longevity; health and wealth”, in order to have a high quality of life in aging. The congress was attended by more than 6,000 experts including biologists, medical doctors, nurses, nutritionists, psychologists, pharmacologists and financial agents, from 82 countries around the world. 4788 abstracts presented were comprised of 53% health science/geriatric, 25% social research, policy and practice, 15% behavioral and psychological sciences, and 7% biological sciences. Among them we presented a simple assay system to investigate dry mouth. Reduction in saliva secretion is caused by various factors, including aging, medications, head and neck radiation therapy, and disturbances in water metabolism. Decreased salivary flow is often associated with many signs and unpleasant symptoms such as masticatory dysfunction, swallowing disorders, deterioration of dental caries and periodontal diseases, halitosis, in-fitting dentures, taste and speech disorders, and pain and a burning sensation in the oral mucosa. Particularly in bedridden elderly and disabled patients, decreased salivary flow not only results in a reduction in quality of life but also causes many problems due to impairment of the self-cleaning function by saliva. This paper is a report about the 19th IAGG World Congress of Gerontology and Geriatrics and is reviewed on the relationship between saliva and oral health, including dry mouth.