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Editorial

Salivary Biomarkers: Potential for Painless Diagnosis

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Oral cavity is a zoo of micro-organisms, containing a wide variety of normal harmless commensals to culprits causing common diseases like dental caries, periodontitis, to those responsible for lesser common conditions like cellulitis, Ludwig's angina. Apart from these well-known pathologies oral micro-organisms can dissipate their effects via blood stream and lead to serious conditions like Cavernous sinus thrombosis or may even affect the heart. Oral cavity has been studied for a multitude of pathologies, which have been an extensive part of ever changing field of research. Apart from being involved in a variety of pathologies, now oral cavity has come into highlight for very good reasons. Salivary markers are a hot topic in the field of research and appear to have promising outcomes in diagnosis of various pathologies. Salivary markers are being deemed useful not only for periodontal diseases but also diseases involving other body tissues and organs. In addition to being useful in predicting the diagnosis and prognosis another important advantage of these diagnostic modalities is the ease and non-invasive collection of saliva unlike other invasive techniques involving collection of blood. Saliva also offers the benefit of easy repeated collection if required.

Saliva is a complex fluid containing an array of molecules which can be useful in laboratory diagnostic procedures, like proteins, enzymes, antibodies, minerals etc. These salivary biomarkers are being extensively studied not only in cases of periodontal diseases but also for monitoring diabetes mellitus, oncological cases, cardiovascular diseases, viral diseases, Gynecology, Endocrinology, Psychiatry etc. Further, even the variation in oral microflora has been shown to be associated with conditions like Crohn's disease, pancreatic cancer etc.

The prospective of being non-invasive makes the salivary biomarkers very attractive but the exact specificity and sensitivity is still not completely known. This is the prime point to be focused on in the further research, which has to be followed by efforts to make these markers easily available, to be used with easily reproducible diagnostic tests and at reasonable costs.

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