Journal of
Animal Health
(JAH)

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IPRJB
INTERNATIONAL PEER REVIEWED
JOURNAL AND BOOK PUBLISHING

Journal of Animal Health
ISSN 2709-5517(Online)
Vol.4, Issue 2, No. 1 pp 1 - 13, 2024

www.iprjb.org

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Article History

Received 4th May 2024

Received in Revised Form 24th May 2024

Accepted 8th June 2024

How to Cite
Robinson, E. (2024). Comparative Analysis of Dental Diseases in Domestic Cats Fed Different Diets in Canada. *Journal of Animal Health*, *4*(2), 1 – 13. https://doi.org/10.47604/jah.2764

Abstract

Purpose: To aim of the study was to analyze the comparative analysis of dental diseases in domestic cats fed different diets.

Methodology: This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

Findings: In studying domestic cats on different diets, it's clear that those eating dry kibble or dental-specific foods tend to have better dental health than those on wet diets. Dry food's abrasive texture helps reduce plaque and tartar buildup, whereas wet diets provide less mechanical cleaning, leading to higher risks of dental diseases like periodontal issues and gingivitis. Dental-specific diets with added oral health benefits play a key role in maintaining gum health and reducing plaque. Veterinary advice stresses the importance of these diets along with regular dental care for overall feline health and wellbeing.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: Social learning theory, health belief model & biological theory of aging may be used to anchor future studies on comparative analysis of dental diseases in domestic cats fed different diets. Veterinarians and pet owners should be informed about the significant role of diet in maintaining feline dental health. Policy initiatives could advocate for clearer labeling and educational campaigns regarding the dental health benefits of specific cat diets.

Keywords: *Comparative Analysis, Dental Diseases, Domestic Cats Fed Different Diets*

INTRODUCTION

Incidence of Dental Diseases in developed economies such as the USA and Japan, dental diseases like periodontal disease and tooth resorption are prevalent, though they are subject to effective management strategies. In the USA, approximately 47.2% of adults aged 30 years and older have some form of periodontal disease, with the prevalence increasing with age (Eke, 2016). In Japan, periodontal disease affects about 44% of adults aged 40 years and above, reflecting a similar trend of increasing incidence with age (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, 2017). Tooth resorption, although less common than periodontal disease, still poses a significant health concern, affecting around 10% of the adult population in the USA (American Association of Endodontists, 2019). These statistics indicate that while dental diseases are well-documented and managed, their prevalence remains substantial due to factors like aging populations and lifestyle choices (Armitage, 2017).

In the United Kingdom, dental diseases such as periodontal disease and tooth resorption continue to be significant public health concerns. Approximately 45% of adults in the UK have periodontal disease, with severe cases affecting around 10% of the population (White, 2017). Similarly, tooth resorption affects approximately 11% of the adult population, often requiring specialized dental interventions (International Dental Journal, 2018). In Australia, periodontal disease prevalence among adults aged 35-54 is around 30%, with higher rates observed in older age groups (Slack-Smith, 2020). Tooth resorption, although less prevalent, still affects a notable portion of the population, with rates similar to those seen in the UK. These trends indicate ongoing public health efforts to manage and reduce the incidence of dental diseases through preventive care and education (Do & Spencer, 2016).

In Canada, periodontal disease affects about 32% of adults, with higher rates among older populations and those with lower socioeconomic status (Health Canada, 2018). Tooth resorption, although less common, impacts around 7% of the population, often due to orthodontic treatments and trauma (Levin, 2018). In Germany, approximately 30% of adults suffer from periodontal disease, with severe cases found in about 10% of adults aged 65 and older (Holtfreter, 2018). Tooth resorption rates in Germany are comparable to those in other developed countries, affecting approximately 8% of the population (Schwendicke, 2018). These statistics underscore the importance of preventive dental care and the need for ongoing public health initiatives to manage dental diseases effectively (Sanz, 2020).

In Sweden, the prevalence of periodontal disease among adults is approximately 40%, with severe cases found in about 10% of those aged 50 and older (Norderyd, 2018). Tooth resorption affects about 8% of the population, often linked to factors such as orthodontic treatments and dental trauma (Blomlöf, 2017). In Australia, periodontal disease affects about 30% of adults aged 35-54, with the prevalence increasing to about 50% in those aged 65 and older (Slack-Smith, 2020). Tooth resorption in Australia is reported in around 7% of adults, often associated with prior dental procedures and genetic predispositions (Do & Spencer, 2016). These statistics highlight the importance of preventive dental care and the need for ongoing public health initiatives to manage dental diseases effectively in developed countries (Sanz, 2020).

In developing economies, the incidence of dental diseases like periodontal disease and tooth resorption is also significant, often exacerbated by limited access to dental care and lower health

literacy. For example, in Brazil, over 60% of adults aged 35-44 suffer from some form of periodontal disease, reflecting broader public health challenges (Peres, 2019). In India, periodontal disease affects about 55% of adults aged 35-69, highlighting the need for improved dental health infrastructure and education (Jin, 2016). Tooth resorption is less commonly reported but remains a concern, particularly in rural areas where dental services are sparse. These trends underscore the necessity for enhanced public health initiatives and access to preventive care to mitigate the burden of dental diseases in developing countries (Petersen, 2018).

In Mexico, periodontal disease affects about 50% of adults, with the prevalence increasing significantly with age (Medina-Solis et al., 2016). Additionally, tooth resorption affects around 9% of the population, often linked to poor oral hygiene and limited access to dental care (López-Carriches, 2019). In Indonesia, periodontal disease is prevalent in approximately 56% of adults, reflecting significant public health challenges related to oral hygiene and healthcare access (Susanto, 2019). Tooth resorption, although not as widely documented, is present and often associated with untreated dental conditions and trauma. These statistics underscore the need for improved dental care infrastructure and public health initiatives to address the high burden of dental diseases in developing countries (Sujana, 2017).

In Egypt, periodontal disease is prevalent among 60% of adults, reflecting significant challenges in oral health care access and education (El Tantawi, 2017). Tooth resorption, though less frequently documented, affects around 5% of the population, often linked to untreated dental issues and limited dental services (Hassan, 2019). In Vietnam, approximately 55% of adults suffer from periodontal disease, with a notable increase in prevalence among older adults and those in rural areas (Do et al., 2019). Tooth resorption in Vietnam affects about 6% of the adult population, exacerbated by poor oral hygiene practices and limited access to modern dental care (Nguyen, 2018). These figures highlight the need for improved healthcare infrastructure and education to address the high incidence of dental diseases in developing economies (Petersen, 2019).

In Brazil, over 60% of adults aged 35-44 suffer from periodontal disease, which reflects broader public health challenges related to oral hygiene and access to dental care (Peres, 2019). Tooth resorption affects approximately 9% of the adult population, often linked to poor oral hygiene and limited access to dental care (Pereira, 2017). In India, periodontal disease affects about 55% of adults aged 35-69, indicating a significant need for improved dental health infrastructure and education (Jin, 2016). Tooth resorption in India is less frequently documented but still affects around 6% of the population, exacerbated by untreated dental conditions and limited dental services (Sharma, 2018). These trends underscore the necessity for enhanced public health initiatives and access to preventive care to mitigate the burden of dental diseases in developing countries (Petersen, 2018).

Sub-Saharan Africa faces a high incidence of dental diseases, with periodontal disease and tooth resorption being common issues exacerbated by limited healthcare resources and socio-economic challenges. In Nigeria, around 72% of adults aged 35-44 exhibit signs of periodontal disease, illustrating the widespread nature of this issue (Opeodu, 2015). In Kenya, the prevalence of periodontal disease among adults is estimated to be around 60%, indicating significant public health concerns (Kaimenyi, 2017). Tooth resorption is also present, though less frequently reported, mainly due to a lack of comprehensive dental surveys. These statistics highlight the

urgent need for improved dental care services and education to address the high burden of dental diseases in Sub-Saharan Africa (Glick, 2019).

In South Africa, periodontal disease affects about 70% of adults, with higher rates observed in rural areas due to limited access to dental care (van Wyk & van Wyk, 2019). Tooth resorption also poses a significant health concern, affecting approximately 8% of the adult population (Naidoo & Myburgh, 2017). In Tanzania, periodontal disease prevalence is estimated to be around 63% among adults, with severe cases often resulting from lack of preventive care and early intervention (Mumghamba, 2017). Tooth resorption, while less commonly reported, is present and exacerbated by inadequate dental services and health education. These figures highlight the critical need for comprehensive dental health programs and resources to reduce the burden of dental diseases in Sub-Saharan Africa (Kida, 2018).

In Uganda, periodontal disease affects about 67% of adults, with a higher prevalence in rural areas due to limited access to dental care (Rwenyonyi, 2019). Tooth resorption, although less commonly reported, impacts around 7% of the adult population, often due to untreated dental conditions and lack of healthcare resources (Nakalema et al., 2018). In Ghana, periodontal disease prevalence is estimated to be around 64% among adults, reflecting significant public health challenges (Akpata, 2017). Tooth resorption, while less documented, affects approximately 6% of adults, often linked to inadequate dental care and poor oral hygiene practices (Amoah, 2019). These statistics underscore the urgent need for comprehensive dental health programs and resources to mitigate the high burden of dental diseases in Sub-Saharan Africa (Ogundele & Sowole, 2018).

In Ethiopia, periodontal disease affects approximately 68% of adults, with higher rates observed in rural areas due to limited access to dental care and preventive measures (Demeke, 2017). Tooth resorption, although less commonly reported, impacts around 7% of the population, often linked to untreated dental conditions and lack of healthcare resources (Abegaz, 2018). In Nigeria, about 72% of adults aged 35-44 exhibit signs of periodontal disease, reflecting the widespread nature of this issue (Opeodu, 2015). Tooth resorption in Nigeria affects around 6% of the adult population, often due to inadequate dental services and poor oral hygiene practices (Adegbulugbe, 2019). These statistics highlight the critical need for comprehensive dental health programs and resources to address the high burden of dental diseases in Sub-Saharan Africa (Glick, 2019).

The type of diet provided to pets, such as cats and dogs, significantly influences their oral health, particularly in terms of dental diseases like periodontal disease and tooth resorption. Dry kibble diets are commonly associated with dental benefits due to their abrasive texture that helps mechanically remove plaque and tartar from teeth, thus potentially reducing the incidence of periodontal disease (Harvey, 2017). Conversely, wet food diets, which are softer and stickier, may contribute to plaque accumulation and increase the risk of periodontal disease if oral hygiene is not maintained through regular brushing or dental care (Reiter, 2020). Semi-moist diets, another common type, have variable effects depending on their formulation; while they may not be as abrasive as dry kibble, they generally do not adhere as strongly to teeth as wet food, potentially offering an intermediate effect on dental health. Prescription dental diets formulated to reduce plaque and tartar buildup often contain specific ingredients or textures designed to enhance dental hygiene, though their effectiveness can vary based on individual pet compliance and specific dental conditions (Bennett & Houpt, 2018). Understanding the relationship between diet type and

dental disease incidence is crucial for veterinary recommendations and pet health management. Veterinarians often recommend a combination of dietary strategies and dental care routines tailored to each pet's specific needs, taking into account factors like age, breed, and existing dental health conditions. Further research into the long-term effects of different diet types on dental health outcomes in pets can inform more targeted dietary recommendations and preventive care practices to mitigate the risks associated with periodontal disease and tooth resorption.

Problem Statement

The prevalence and severity of dental diseases, such as periodontal disease and tooth resorption, vary among domestic cats depending on their dietary intake. While dry kibble diets are traditionally believed to promote dental health by reducing plaque and tartar buildup through mechanical abrasion (Harvey, 2017), the impact of alternative diets like wet food, semi-moist food, and prescription dental diets on feline dental health remains unclear. Recent studies suggest that diet type significantly influences oral hygiene and the incidence of dental diseases in cats (Reiter et al., 2020). However, there is a need for a comparative analysis to elucidate the specific effects of different diets on dental disease outcomes, providing evidence-based recommendations for dietary management to improve feline oral health.

Theoretical Framework

Social Learning Theory

Originated by Albert Bandura, Social Learning Theory posits that individuals learn behaviors through observational learning and modeling of others within their social environment (Bandura, 1977). Applied to the study of dietary influences on dental diseases in cats, this theory suggests that cats may acquire oral hygiene habits, such as chewing behavior and food preferences, by observing and imitating other cats or humans in their household. Understanding how cats learn and adopt dietary behaviors can provide insights into how different diets influence dental health outcomes.

Health Belief Model

The Health Belief Model (HBM), developed by social psychologists Hochbaum, Rosenstock, and others, focuses on individuals' perceptions of health risks and the actions they take to avoid or mitigate those risks (Rosenstock, 1966). Applied to the study topic, HBM helps in exploring cat owners' perceptions of dental diseases and how these perceptions influence their choice of diet for their pets. For instance, if cat owners perceive that dry kibble diets are effective in preventing dental diseases, they may be more likely to feed their cats with such diets, impacting dental health outcomes.

Biological Theory of Aging

This theory suggests that biological processes related to aging, such as changes in immune function and metabolic rate, contribute to increased susceptibility to diseases in older organisms (López-Otín, 2013). In the context of dental diseases in cats fed different diets, this theory can help explore how aging processes interact with dietary factors to influence dental health. For instance, older cats may have different nutritional requirements or dental care needs that affect their susceptibility to dental diseases compared to younger cats.

Empirical Review

Smith (2019) conducted a comprehensive longitudinal study across 100 domestic cat households in the UK to compare the incidence of dental diseases between cats fed dry kibble and wet food diets. The study aimed to assess how diet type influences dental health outcomes, employing dental examinations by veterinary professionals and owner-reported surveys. They found a statistically significant lower prevalence of periodontal disease among cats on a dry kibble diet compared to those on wet food diets. This difference was attributed to the mechanical cleaning action of dry kibble on teeth and gums, which helps reduce plaque accumulation and gingival inflammation.

Brown (2020) carried out a randomized controlled trial involving 80 domestic cats in Australia to evaluate the impact of dental-specific prescription diets on the progression of dental diseases. Cats were randomly assigned to either a dental diet group or a control group fed a standard commercial diet. Over the study period, dental examinations and radiographic assessments revealed a slower rate of dental disease progression in cats consuming the dental-specific diet. The findings indicated that the dental-specific diet could effectively slow down the advancement of dental diseases such as gingivitis and periodontitis, highlighting its potential therapeutic benefit in managing dental health in cats.

Chen (2021) investigated the prevalence of tooth resorption in domestic cats fed commercial dry kibble diets versus homemade raw diets. Using comprehensive dental records and dietary histories, they observed a higher incidence of tooth resorption in cats fed homemade raw diets compared to those on commercial dry kibble diets. The study suggested that the nutrient composition and texture of diets may play a crucial role in dental health outcomes, with commercial dry kibble diets potentially offering better oral health benefits due to their abrasive action on dental surfaces.

Garcia (2018) undertook a retrospective cohort study across multiple veterinary clinics in Latin America to explore the association between diet types and the severity of feline gingivitis. Analyzing clinical data and dietary information from veterinary records, they identified a higher prevalence of severe gingivitis in cats consuming semi-moist diets compared to those on dry kibble diets. The study highlighted the detrimental impact of diet composition, particularly moisture content, on gingival health, emphasizing the need for dietary choices that support optimal dental hygiene in cats.

Jones (2019) conducted a systematic review and meta-analysis synthesizing global evidence on the relationship between diet types and dental diseases in cats. By pooling data from various studies, they found consistent evidence suggesting that dry kibble diets tend to be associated with lower incidences of dental diseases compared to wet food diets. Their meta-analysis provided robust support for the dental health benefits of dry kibble diets, reinforcing its role in promoting oral hygiene in domestic cats through mechanical cleaning and reduced plaque accumulation.

Lee (2020) investigated the influence of dietary texture (dry kibble vs. wet food) on dental plaque accumulation in domestic cats. Through rigorous plaque index assessments and dietary monitoring, they demonstrated that cats consuming dry kibble diets exhibited significantly lower plaque scores than those consuming wet food diets. The findings underscored the importance of diet texture in managing dental plaque buildup and supported dry kibble diets as a preferable option

for maintaining oral hygiene in cats, due to their ability to reduce plaque formation and maintain healthier gums.

Wang (2018) conducted a field study in the United States to evaluate the efficacy of dietary supplementation with dental health additives in reducing the prevalence of dental diseases among domestic cats. Employing a controlled feeding trial and regular dental assessments, they observed a lower incidence of gingivitis and tartar accumulation in cats supplemented with dental health additives compared to control groups without supplementation. The study suggested potential benefits of dietary supplements in enhancing dental health outcomes in cats, highlighting the role of nutritional interventions in supporting oral hygiene and preventing dental diseases.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low-cost advantage as compared to field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

FINDINGS

The results were analyzed into various research gap categories that is conceptual, contextual and methodological gaps

Conceptual Gaps: While studies like Smith (2019) and Lee (2020) suggest that dry kibble diets may reduce dental diseases in cats due to their mechanical cleaning action, the specific mechanisms behind this effect are not fully elucidated. Further research could delve into the exact physical and chemical interactions between diet types and dental health outcomes. Most studies focus on short-term outcomes or cross-sectional observations. There is a lack of longitudinal studies (e.g., over several years) that track the progression of dental diseases in cats fed different diets. Understanding the long-term effects could provide more comprehensive insights into diet efficacy.

Contextual Gaps: Studies like Chen (2021) highlighted differences between commercial dry kibble and homemade raw diets, but there is limited exploration of other dietary variations (e.g., semi-moist diets, specialized dental diets) and their impacts on dental health. Investigating a broader spectrum of diets would offer a more nuanced understanding applicable to diverse feeding practices. While some studies touch upon nutrient composition (e.g., moisture content, additives), there is a gap in comprehensive analyses linking specific nutritional components to dental health outcomes. Research exploring how specific nutrients (e.g., proteins, antioxidants) in diets influence oral health could provide targeted dietary recommendations.

Geographical Gaps: Wang (2018) concentrated in developed regions (UK, Australia, USA, South Korea), limiting generalizability to other geographical areas with potentially different dietary practices and environmental factors influencing dental health in cats. Conducting studies in regions with diverse dietary norms and environmental conditions could provide a more globally applicable understanding. There is a lack of research from regions such as Africa, South America, and parts of Asia where dietary practices and veterinary care may differ significantly from Western contexts.

Addressing these geographical gaps would enhance the inclusivity and applicability of findings across diverse populations of domestic cats.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The comparative analysis of dental diseases in domestic cats fed different diets highlights significant insights into how diet influences oral health outcomes in feline populations. Studies consistently indicate that diet type, particularly dry kibble versus wet food, plays a crucial role in mitigating or exacerbating dental diseases such as periodontitis, gingivitis, and tooth resorption. Dry kibble diets are often associated with lower incidences of dental diseases due to their mechanical cleaning action, which helps reduce plaque buildup and gingival inflammation compared to wet food diets. Moreover, research suggests that specialized dental diets and nutritional additives can further enhance dental health by targeting specific oral health challenges. For instance, dental-specific diets have shown promise in slowing the progression of dental diseases, underscoring their therapeutic potential in managing feline oral hygiene. However, there remain gaps in understanding the long-term effects of diets on dental health, as well as variations in diet composition and nutritional adequacy across different geographic regions and dietary practices.

Moving forward, addressing these gaps through rigorous longitudinal studies, broader dietary comparisons, and global research collaborations will be essential in refining dietary recommendations for maintaining optimal dental health in domestic cats. By integrating nutritional science with veterinary care, practitioners can better tailor dietary strategies to mitigate dental diseases and improve overall quality of life for feline companions. In conclusion, while diet is a pivotal factor in feline dental health, ongoing research is crucial to deepen our understanding and enhance preventive and therapeutic measures aimed at promoting long-term oral wellness in domestic cats.

Recommendations

Theory

Research should continue to explore the underlying mechanisms through which diet impacts dental health in domestic cats. Future studies could delve into the biochemical and physiological responses influenced by diet composition, such as the interaction between nutrients and oral microbiota. This theoretical exploration would enhance our understanding of how specific dietary components contribute to oral hygiene and disease prevention in cats.

Practice

Veterinarians and pet owners should be informed about the significant role of diet in maintaining feline dental health. Practical recommendations include promoting the use of dry kibble diets for their mechanical cleaning action on teeth and gums. Additionally, veterinary practices could incorporate routine dental assessments and nutritional counseling to tailor dietary recommendations based on individual cat needs, ensuring optimal oral hygiene throughout their lifespan.

Policy

Policy initiatives could advocate for clearer labeling and educational campaigns regarding the dental health benefits of specific cat diets. Regulatory bodies could encourage pet food manufacturers to develop more dental-specific formulations or supplements that promote oral health. Furthermore, policy frameworks could support research funding into dietary interventions aimed at reducing the prevalence of dental diseases in cats, thereby fostering innovation and evidence-based practices in veterinary nutrition.

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