

Title: Oral Health Beliefs in people living with Von Willebrand's disease in Ireland.

Background: Clinical studies reporting on people living with a congenital bleeding disorder have found that bleeding from the mouth is mostly attributable to gingivitis. Patients stop brushing their teeth in the presence of gingivitis (thus prolonging gingivitis) as they attribute the bleeding to their bleeding disorder, rather than to the presence of dental plaque.

Methods: In total, twenty-four participants were asked to complete a questionnaire. The questionnaire investigated self report of oral health, oral health related quality of life, behaviours and dental anxiety, perception and experience of gingival bleeding.

Results: Most of the participants (71%) found their oral health good, although, they still reported problems with their mouth. Self report of oral health behaviours was good, but this may well be influenced by social desirable responding. However, most respondents are reported to require dental treatment. Participants were mostly unconcerned about the presence of bleeding gums (66%) though a small proportion reported concerns. They also reported that the bleeding was related to tooth brushing techniques, the use of hard brushes or flossing (59%). Most participants acknowledged that they had little understanding of why their gums bled (66 %) but felt that treatment (dental) would be beneficial.

Conclusion: The data is important to understand beliefs of people with vWD and so to form interventions to promote self care (particularly oral hygiene) in this group.