

Dental Pathologies and Diet in Pre-hispanic Populations of the Equatorial Pacific Coast: Literature Review

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Abstract : Objective. The objective of this literature review is to compile updated information from studies that have addressed the association between dental pathologies and diet in prehistoric populations of the equatorial Pacific coast. Materials and method. The research carried out corresponds to a documentary study of ex post facto retrospective, historiographic and bibliometric design. A bibliographic review search was carried out in the libraries of the Colombian Institute of Anthropology and History (ICANH) and the National University of Colombia for books and articles on the archeology of the region. In addition, a search was carried out in databases and the Internet for books and articles on dental anthropology, archeology and dentistry on the relationship between dental pathologies and diet in prehistoric and current populations from different parts of the world. Conclusions. The complex societies (500 BC - 300 AD) of the equatorial Pacific coast used an agricultural system of intensive monoculture of corn (*Zea mays*). This form of subsistence was reflected in an intensification of dental pathologies such as dental caries, dental abscesses generated by cavities, and enamel hypoplasia associated with a lower frequency of wear. The Upper Formative period (800 A.D. -16th century A.D.) is characterized by the development of polyculture, slash-and-burn agriculture, as an adaptive agricultural strategy to the ecological damage generated by the intensive economic activity of complex societies. This process leads to a more varied diet, which generates better dental health.

Keywords : dental pathologies, nutritional diet, equatorial pacific coast, dental anthropology

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