

The effects of manuka honey on plaque and gingivitis: a pilot study

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Abstract

Research has shown that manuka honey has superior antimicrobial properties that can be used with success in the treatment of wound healing, peptic ulcers and bacterial gastro-enteritis. Studies have already shown that manuka honey with a high antibacterial activity is likely to be non-cariogenic. The current pilot study investigated whether or not manuka honey with an antibacterial activity rated UMF 15 could be used to reduce dental plaque and clinical levels of gingivitis. A chewable "honey leather" was produced for this trial. Thirty volunteers were randomly allocated to chew or suck either the manuka honey product, or sugarless chewing gum, for 10 minutes, three times a day, after each meal. Plaque and gingival bleeding scores were recorded before and after the 21-day trial period. Analysis of the results indicated that there were statistically highly significant reductions in the mean plaque scores (0.99 reduced to 0.65; $p=0.001$), and the percentage of bleeding sites (48% reduced to 17%; $p=0.001$), in the manuka honey group, with no significant changes in the control group.

Conclusion: These results suggest that there may be a potential therapeutic role for manuka honey confectionery in the treatment of gingivitis and periodontal disease.

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