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ABSTRACT

Objective
A literature review of systematic reviews and in situ and in vivo randomized controlled trials was conducted in order to assess the role of casein phosphopeptide - amorphous calcium phosphate in providing caries-preventive effect superior to any intervention or placebo.

Methods
Initially, Pubmed database was searched for systematic reviews. Two systematic reviews were identified, which concluded that the quantity and quality of randomized controlled trials were insufficient to recommend the clinical use of the product. After this, Pubmed database was searched for in situ and in vivo randomized controlled trials that were not included in the reviews identified. In vivo and in situ studies yielded mixed results.

Results
In situ studies indicated greater efficacy of casein phosphopeptide - amorphous calcium phosphate in comparison with placebo. Whereas, in vivo studies demonstrated different findings.

Conclusion
Casein phosphopeptide - amorphous calcium phosphate had a performance equivalent to or greater efficacy than placebo; fluoride was more effective than the casein complex; casein phosphopeptide - amorphous calcium phosphate associated with fluoride showed better or equivalent performance to that of placebo. In view of available evidence, it was not possible to generalize the indication of casein phosphopeptide - amorphous calcium phosphate for preventing dental caries. Further studies on the preventive effect and longer treatment applications are recommended.


RESUMO

Objetivo
Foi conduzida revisão da literatura em busca de ensaios clínicos randomizados in situ e in vivo que avaliassem o papel do complexo de fosfopeptídeo de caseína - fosfato de cálcio amorfo na prevenção de lesões de cárie.

Métodos
Inicialmente, buscou-se identificar na base Pubmed revisões sistemáticas sobre o tema. Foram identificadas duas revisões sistemáticas, que concluíram que a quantidade e qualidade dos ensaios clínicos randomizados são insuficientes para recomendação do uso clínico do produto. Posteriormente, pesquisaram-se ensaios clínicos randomizados in situ e in vivo que não tivessem sido incluídos nas revisões identificadas.

Resultados
Os estudos in vivo e in situ tiveram resultados contraditórios. Os estudos in situ indicaram uma maior eficácia do complexo de fosfopeptídeo de caseína - fosfato de cálcio amorfo em relação ao placebo. Já os estudos in vivo demonstraram diferentes.

Conclusão
Complexo de fosfopeptídeo de caseína - fosfato de cálcio amorfo apresentou desempenho ora superior, ora equivalente ao placebo; o flúor demonstrou maior eficácia que o complexo de caseína; o complexo de fosfopeptídeo de caseína - fosfato de cálcio amorfo associado ao flúor mostrou ora melhor, ora equivalente ao placebo. Diante da evidência científica disponível, não se pode generalizar a indicação do complexo de fosfopeptídeo de caseína - fosfato de cálcio amorfo para prevenção de lesões cariosas.

INTRODUCTION

Caries: processes of dental remineralization and demineralization

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), in 2003, caries diseases was the major public health problems in the majority of industrialized countries. It affects 60 to 90% of children of school-going age, and the large majority of adults1.

Caries is known to be a multifactorial disease. The development of caries lesions depends on interaction between the tooth structure, cariogenic microorganisms (particularly Streptococcus mutans,) and presence of fermentable carbohydrates. Therefore, preventive and therapeutic approach must consider the set of these factors.

Cariogenic microorganisms colonize the tooth surface and form dental biofilm. In physiologic conditions, the oral fluids (saliva and biofilm) present a higher concentration of calcium (Ca) and phosphate (P) in the medium outside of the tooth (supersaturation) than in hydroxyapatite (HA), which is the primary constituent of the enamel structure (crystallized form of calcium phosphate) These ions are continually deposited on the tooth surfaces and in areas in which demineralization processes occur. This process is known as the “natural defense phenomenon” promoted by saliva to promote the mineral preservation of tooth enamel2.

The loss (demineralization) and gain (remineralization) of minerals on the enamel surface is a dynamic physical-chemical process, which occurs when the bacteria present in dental biofilm are exposed to a diet composed of fermentable carbohydrates, particularly sucrose. Whenever sugar penetrates into cariogenic biofilm, it is converted into acid and the biofilm fluid becomes saturated in comparison with the mineral component of enamel. In this situation, pH has a low critical value, at which demineralization of enamel occurs. However, after a certain period, the physiological value of pH is restored when sugar consumption ceases, and the conditions of supersaturation are re-established. At this time, reposition of a certain quantity of lost mineral occurs, in a process denominates dental remineralization. This reposition of lost mineral occurs by means of Ca and P ions present in biofilm fluid and saliva, right after dental biofilm removal by brushing. The quantity of Ca and P replaced is lower than the amount lost, so that small mineral losses occur3.

If the factors responsible for disease (biofilm and frequent exposure to sugar) are not controlled, with the passage of time, mineral loss cannot be impeded. Therefore, events of mineral dissolution will repeatedly occur, and may lead to a degree of demineralization greater than that of the remineralizing capacity of the oral fluids. Therefore, an imbalance in these processes of demineralization and remineralization may result in small mineral losses, only observed by electronic or optical microscopy; mineral losses observed clinically (white spots), up to the formation of cavities on the tooth surface, in which it will be necessary to perform invasive interventions. Moreover, it is important to point out that caries disease progresses in a different manner among individuals, as it is a disease in which individual susceptibility is also an important factor for its progression.

Fluoride

At present, it is known that the action of fluoride (F) in interfering in the profess of caries lesion formation is not systemic, but local. For this purpose, fluoride must be present in the biofilm and saliva at the time in which the biofilm is exposed to sugar, or after its removal during tooth brushing2.

It is noted that fluoride, even in low concentrations, interferes in the process of caries development. Hydroxyapatite (HA) dissolves at a pH of around 5.5, while fluorapatite (FA: crystallized form of F, Ca and P) dissolve at a pH close to 4.5. When the oral pH remains between 4.5 and 5.5, the process of HA demineralization occurs, in which there is release of Ca, P and hydroxyls in the oral environment. If there is fluoride present, these ions react with it and fluorapatite is formed which, saturated at this pH, is deposited on the tooth surface. This compensates the mineral loss occurring at pH between 4.5 and 5.54. However, this mineral reposition occurring by means of fluorapatite formation is not considered remineralization, in fact. but rather as an inhibition of demineralization, because the mineral component deposited differs from the one lost. Furthermore, fluorapatite is deposited on the tooth surface, while the Ha is dissolved in the subsuperficial region of the tooth2.

As previously stated, caries is essentially a disease related to tooth demineralization. A considerable body of literature has established the use of fluoride as being an important agent in dental remineralization. The interaction between the ions of Ca and fluoride, which form fluorapatite, is greater between the ions of Ca and OH, which forms HA. This gives fluorapatite greater stability and lower solubility. Therefore, fluoride is the main component of dentifrices and mouth washes4.

The indirect effect of fluoride on the reduction of dental demineralization, when pH falls, is complemented by the natural effect of fluoride on dental remineralization,
Efficacy of casein derivate CPP-ACP

There have been demonstrations that the complex of casein phosphopeptide (CPP) - amorphous calcium phosphate (ACP) has an anticariogenic activity in laboratory experiments in animals and humans. The potential of CPP-ACP to inhibit demineralization and to stimulate remineralization is based on the ability of CPP to stabilize ACP, and later formation of CPP-ACP. This complex acts as a reservoir of Ca and P that bonds to the plaque and tooth surface. In the face of an acid medium CPP-ACP releases Ca and P ions, so that mineral supersaturation is maintained in the environment outside of the tooth, and consequently, reduction in the demineralization process and stimulation of remineralization is achieved\(^7\)?\(^8\).

Furthermore, the nanocomplex of CPP-ACP has been shown to have a synergic effect on fluoridated compounds. This synergic effect must be attributed to the formation of nano-agglomerates of Ca, F and P ions (CPP-ACP/F), which results in greater incorporation of fluoride ions into plaque, together with the increase in the concentration of bioavailable Ca and P ions\(^5\).

The intervention based on CPP-ACP most commonly used in in vivo studies occurs by means of chewing gums. Other CPP-ACP vehicles include mouth washes and topical cream, denominated Tooth Mousse\textsuperscript{TM} (Europe and Australia) or MI Paste\textsuperscript{TM} (United States of America and Japan).

**METHODS**

The review of the literature was conducted with the aim of verifying the clinical efficacy of CPP-ACP in inhibiting the formation of caries lesions.

Initially, a search was conducted in the electronic databases of Pubmed, The Cochrane Library and Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (CRD) for systematic reviews (SR), with or without meta-analyses, which evaluated the efficacy of CPP-ACP (Table 1).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bases</th>
<th>Terms</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Studies selected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cochrane Library (via Bireme)</td>
<td>CPP ACP</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>systematic review protocol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centre for Reviews and Dissemination</td>
<td>CPP ACP</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Afterwards a search was conducted in Pubmed for randomized clinical trials (RCT) (in vivo or in situ) which had not been included in the systematic reviews identified and which evaluated the efficacy of CPP-ACP, in any application vehicle (Table 2).
In addition, as the articles published in the year 2012 were still in the process of indexation by PubMed, a more sensitive search was conducted by means of using the terms “casein phosphopeptide-amorphous calcium phosphate nanocomplex”[Substance] OR “CPP ACP”[All Fields] AND (randomized controlled trial[Publication Type] OR (randomized[Title/Abstract] AND trial[Title/Abstract]))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bases</th>
<th>Terms</th>
<th>Results</th>
<th>Studies selected</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

In this review, 12 studies were selected, which tested the efficacy of casein derivatives in dental clinical practice. These studies were selected by means of the inclusion criterion, and measurement of the force and quality of the studies, in accordance with the System of Classification of Evidence, developed by the Canadian Task Force for preventive treatments. The outcomes of interest were as follows: prevention of caries (10 studies), treatment of dentinal hypersensitivity (1 study) and treatment of xerostomia (1 study).

Of the ten studies that had prevention of caries as the outcome, eight were in situ and two were in vivo studies. Among the latter studies mentioned, one of them were related to the regression of white spot lesion. The other in vivo study evaluated the regression or progression or root caries lesions with the use of a mouth wash solution based on casein derivatives associated with calcium phosphate (CD-CP), in comparison with the use of a fluoride-based solution, in individuals with salivary gland dysfunctions (Table 3).

**RESULTS**

Systematic reviews

Initially, 2 systematic reviews were identified. The first of these, conducted by Azarpazhooh et al., reunited randomized and quasi randomized clinical studies, published up to October 2007, which tested the efficacy of casein derivatives (among them CPP-ACP) in the diverse forms of dental application.

**Table 3. Studies in vivo and in situ found in the review by Azarpazhooh et al.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author/Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Study period*</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Type of study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Andersson et al. 9</td>
<td>26 adolescents (60 teeth, 152 visible white spot lesions)</td>
<td>Test Group: Brushing twice a day with CPP-ACP-based cream for 3 months, followed by use of fluoridated dentifrice for a further 3 months. Control Group: Fluoridated mouth wash once a day in addition to the daily use of fluoridated dentifrice for six months.</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>Visual inspection and evaluation by means of fluorescent laser of white spot lesions in time intervals of 1, 3, 6 and 12 months after beginning of intervention.</td>
<td>RCS in vivo mono-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hay &amp; Thomson 10</td>
<td>124 patients with salivary gland dysfunction</td>
<td>Test Group: CD-CP-based mouth wash (casein derivative associated with calcium phosphate) 3 times a day. Control Group: Fluoridated mouth wash 3 times a day.</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>Reduction of root caries lesion (Bite-wing radiograph) after 12 months</td>
<td>RCS in vivo double-blind (blinding not clear)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cai et al. 3</td>
<td>10 adults</td>
<td>Chewing gum without sugar + 20 mg citric acid + 18.8 mg of CPP-ACP. Chewing gum without addition of citric acid and CPP-ACP</td>
<td>14 days</td>
<td>Degree of subsuperficial remineralization.</td>
<td>RCS in situ double-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schirrmeister et al.11</td>
<td>15 adults</td>
<td>CPP-ACP-based chewing gum. Milk. With addition of 2g CPP/ACP. Without addition of CPP/ACP.</td>
<td>21 days</td>
<td>Reduction in depth of lesion.</td>
<td>RCS in situ mono-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walker et al. 12</td>
<td>10 adults</td>
<td>Sugar-free chewing gum with: 30 mg of urea + 25mg of calcium phosphate. 30 mg of urea + 47 mg of CPP-ACP.</td>
<td>15 days</td>
<td>Degree of subsuperficial remineralization.</td>
<td>RCS in situ double-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Itthagarun et al. 13</td>
<td>12 adults</td>
<td>Chewing gum: With addition of CPP-ACP (18.8MG) Without addition of CPP-ACP.</td>
<td>21 days</td>
<td>Reduction in lesion depth (remineralization of lesions in situ).</td>
<td>RCS in situ double-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iijima et al. 14</td>
<td>10 adults</td>
<td>Chewing gum: With addition of CPP-ACP (18.8MG) Without addition of CPP-ACP.</td>
<td>14 days</td>
<td>Degree of subsuperficial remineralization.</td>
<td>RCS in situ double-blind</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Efficacy of casein derivate CPP-ACP

With regard to in situ studies, the patients used an acrylic device that covered the palate from the first premolar to the last tooth in the dental arch, into which fragments of human teeth were fitted, which had demineralized subsuperficial lesions, in 7 of the 8 in situ studies identified. Only in the study of Schirrmeister et al. was a fragment of bovine tooth used in the acrylic devices fitted to the mandible.

With regard to the conclusions of these studies, only the study of Schirrmeister et al. did not observe a higher rate of demineralization in the subsuperficial lesions evaluated. All the other seven in situ studies observed a significant increase in the degree of remineralization of the lesions treated with casein compounds.

Only one in vivo study was identified, which tested the efficacy of CPP-ACP compounds in the process of caries lesions, in comparison with fluoridated compounds. Visual inspection and evaluation by means of fluorescent laser were performed in time intervals of 1, 3, 6 and 12 months after beginning of intervention. There was only statistical significance that benefitted CPP-ACP (63%) in the reduction of white spots in comparison with fluoridated compounds (25%) in the evaluation that used visual inspection performed 12 months after the beginning of treatment. Whereas, the method that used fluorescent laser was not capable of identifying any difference between the treatments.

The other review found was associated with a meta-analysis. In this study, Yengopal & Mickenautsch included clinical studies (in situ and in vivo) and systematic reviews, published up to August 2008, which evaluated the efficacy of CPP-ACP-based compounds. In order to be selected, the studies needed to make information available with respect to sample size, loss of follow-up of patients and about the follow-up period of the study. Eleven studies and one systematic review were selected. All of the 11 studies selected presented Score A, on a scale of evaluation, with regard to randomization, confidentiality in allocation and blinding. Only two studies presented Score B for the parameter confidentiality in allocation. Of these 11 studies, 5 participated in the meta-analysis, as they were the only one with characteristics that allowed statistical analysis of their results in conjunction; that is, they were clinically and methodologically homogeneous, and presented similar outcomes.

All of the five studies included in the meta-analysis were of the in situ type, with a short duration of follow-up (7 to 21 days), and the intervention used was chewing gum containing CPP-ACP. The result of this analysis showed higher rates of tooth remineralization in favor of the use of CPP-ACP-based chewing gums, in comparison with the use of chewing gum without the addition of CPP-ACP, or in comparison with no intervention. Among the other 6 studies not included in the meta-analysis, were in situ studies, and all of them showed a higher rate of remineralization with the use of CPP-ACP. However, it is worth emphasizing that one of these studies compared CPP-ACP added to fluoride in comparison with CPP-ACP alone and with

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study</th>
<th>Treatment</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Observations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cai et al.</td>
<td>Mouth wash 2% CPP-ACP</td>
<td>5 days</td>
<td>Degree of subsuperficial remineralization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6% CPP-ACP Calcium + phosphate</td>
<td></td>
<td>RCS In situ double-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Placebo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cai et al.</td>
<td>CPP-ACP-based chewing gum or other calcium-based compound</td>
<td>14 days</td>
<td>Degree of subsuperficial remineralization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shen et al.</td>
<td>Sorbitol (pellet gum) + 4 different doses of CPP-ACP</td>
<td>14 days</td>
<td>Degree of subsuperficial remineralization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sorbitol (slab gum) + 4 different doses of CPP-ACP</td>
<td></td>
<td>RCS In situ double-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Xylitol + 4 different doses of CPP-ACP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 different doses: 0, 0.19, 18.8 and 56.4 mg CPP-ACP</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Period of each of the interventions tested.

The review of Azarpazhooh et al. concluded that the quality and quantity of articles reviewed were insufficient to generate conclusive evidence of the long term effectiveness of casein derivative compounds, especially CPP-ACP.
fluoride alone. As a result, CPP-ACP associated with fluoride was observed to be the intervention that showed the best performance, while the intervention based on CPP-ACP only had a similar performance to that of fluoride alone.

The other two studies not included in the meta-analysis were in vivo. One of them was the study that was included in the systematic review of Azarpazhooh et al., which was that of Anderson et al.,. The other study refers to that of Morgan et al., in which 2,720 children used chewing gum with or without the addition of CPP-ACP. The follow-up period of the study was 24 months, and regression of caries lesions was observed by means of bite-wing radiographs that allowed visualization of the interproximal dental regions.

It was observed that of the nine in situ studies found in the review of Yengopal & Mickenautsch, seven studies, coincided with those already selected by the review of Azarpazhooh et al.; the other two studies found only in the more recent review were published after the period of search conducted by Azarpazhooh et al.

As follows below, there is information about these two new in situ studies and the new in vivo study found by Yengopal & Mickenautsch (Table 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author/Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Study period*</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Type of study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reynolds et al.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Study 1: Mouth wash based on CPP-ACP (2%) + 450 ppm Fluoride</td>
<td>Study 1, 4 days</td>
<td>Study 1: Level of fluoride present in dental plaque</td>
<td>RCS in situ with in vivo stage double-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Study 2: Dentifrice 1000 ppm F, as NaF 2800 ppm F, as NaF 2% CPP-ACP 2% CPP-ACP + 1100 ppm F as NaF</td>
<td>Study 2, 14 days</td>
<td>Study 2: Degree of subsuperficial remineralization</td>
<td>RCS in situ double-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manton et al.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3 types of chewing gum without addition of CPP-ACP</td>
<td>14 days</td>
<td>Degree of subsuperficial remineralization</td>
<td>RCS in situ double-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morgan et al.</td>
<td>2720</td>
<td>Sorbitol-based chewing gum without addition of CPP-ACP</td>
<td>24 months</td>
<td>Progression or regression of caries lesions observed by means of interproximal radiographs</td>
<td>RCS in vivo double-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>CPP-ACP-based chewing gum, 3 times a day (926 patients completed the treatment)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Period of each of the interventions tested.

Yengopal & Mickenautsch observed that in spite of the meta-analysis having been conducted only for in situ studies that presented a short period of exposure to this complex, the promising results of the in vivo studies, one of them with a large sample size and both with a longer time of exposure to the CPP-ACP complex (12 to 24 months), suggested the remineralizing effect of the CPP-ACP complex, in studies with long follow-up periods. It is suggested that further randomized in vivo studies, with adequate methodology and longer follow-up periods, should be conducted.

Studies in vitro and in vivo

In addition to the systematic reviews cited, as mentioned in the Methodology, a new search was conducted in the Pubmed database in May 2012, in order to identify in situ and in vivo randomized clinical trials that evaluated the remineralizing potential of CPP-ACP, published after the search conducted by the last systematic review published about the subject (after the month of August 2008). Six in situ and 7 in vivo studies were identified (Table 5).

With regard to the conclusion of the 6 in situ studies, all of them showed a higher rate of remineralization with the use of CPP-ACP alone or associated with F. However, it is important to point out that four of these studies compared CPP-ACP with a placebo, while two studies compared interventions of CPP-ACP associated with fluoride, in comparison with CPP-ACP alone. In only one of them was the comparison with fluoride alone, the results of which demonstrated that the intervention based on CPP-ACP associated with fluoride was the one that obtained the best results, followed by CPP-ACP alone, which in turn showed a better performance than that of fluoride alone.
### Table 5. Studies in vivo and in situ found in search conducted in Pubmed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author/Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Study period*</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>Type of study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cochrane et al. 20</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Chewing gum with addition of CPP-ACP</td>
<td>14 days</td>
<td>Degree of remineralization</td>
<td>RCS In situ double-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shen et al. 21</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Chewing gum without addition of CPP-ACP</td>
<td>10 days</td>
<td>Degree of subsuperficial remineralization</td>
<td>RCS In situ double-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walker et al. 22</td>
<td>Study 1 10</td>
<td>Control (65% sucrose + 33% glucose); Sugar + 0.5% (w/w) CPP-ACP; Control free of sugar</td>
<td>10 days</td>
<td>Degree of subsuperficial remineralization</td>
<td>RCS In situ double-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Study 2 14</td>
<td>Control (65% sucrose + 33% glucose syrup); Sugar + 0.5% (w/w) CPP-ACP; Control free of sugar</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Srinivasan et al. 23</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Cream/mousse based on CPP-ACP and fluoride 900 ppm</td>
<td>2 days</td>
<td>Degree of subsurface remineralization in teeth that suffered erosion</td>
<td>RCS In situ mono-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walker et al. 24</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100 mL cows milk based on CPP-ACP (0.2%)</td>
<td>15 days</td>
<td>Degree of subsuperficial remineralization</td>
<td>RCS In situ double-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cai et al. 25</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Chewing gum with or without addition of CPP-ACP</td>
<td>14 days</td>
<td>Degree of subsuperficial remineralization</td>
<td>RCS In situ double-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robertson et al. 26</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>CPP-ACP-based cream with addition of fluoride</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>Prevention and reduction of white spots.</td>
<td>RCS In vivo double-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altenburge et al. 27</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Tooth brushing with fluoridated dentifrice and use of CPP-ACP-based cream, for 3 minutes, 1 time per day.</td>
<td>3 weeks</td>
<td>Evaluation of initial lesion of fissures in molars and premolars before and after treatment</td>
<td>RCS In vivo mono-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beerens et al. 28</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>CPP-ACP-based cream, associated with fluoride, applied before going to sleep.</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>Degree of remineralization of white spot lesions and composition of bacterial plaque</td>
<td>RCS In vivo double-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uysal et al. 29</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>The brackets were bonded to premolars with 2 types of cement: Aegis Ortho® (composition based on ACP)</td>
<td>30 days</td>
<td>Reduction of dental demineralization around orthodontic brackets</td>
<td>RCS In vivo mono-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uysal et al. 30</td>
<td>21 patients 60 teeth</td>
<td>Cream based on CPP-ACP Fluoride in gel form</td>
<td>60 days (in vivo phase)/14 days (in vitro phase)</td>
<td>Reduction of dental demineralization around orthodontic brackets</td>
<td>RCS In vivo and in vitro mono-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bröchner et al. 31</td>
<td>60 patients</td>
<td>Tooth brushing with fluoridated dentifrice in the morning, and application of CPP-ACP-based cream at night.</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
<td>Degrees of remineralization of white spot lesions</td>
<td>RCS In vivo mono-blind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bailey et al. 32</td>
<td>45 patients</td>
<td>Cream based on CPP-ACP Cream placebo *Application was made twice a day, after tooth brushing with fluoridated dentifrice</td>
<td>12 weeks</td>
<td>Regression of white spot lesions</td>
<td>RCS In vivo double-blind</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Period of each of the interventions tested.
Among the 7 in vivo studies, 2 of them\textsuperscript{26,28} evaluated the use of CPP-ACP associated with fluoride, which was shown to be more effective than the placebo in only one of the studies\textsuperscript{26}. In the study of Beerens et al.\textsuperscript{28} there was no significant difference between the interventions.

Of the other 5 in vivo articles\textsuperscript{27,29-32}, in only one of them\textsuperscript{30} was an intervention used in comparison with one based on F, which was shown to be as effective as CPP-ACP. Among the four remaining studies, in which the placebo was used for comparison, in three of these\textsuperscript{27,29,32} CPP-ACP demonstrated a higher remineralization potential. However, in one of these studies\textsuperscript{27} the greater efficacy of CPP-ACP was observed only when some evaluations were made by means of fluorescent laser. Nevertheless, there was no significant difference between the treatments when visual evaluation was made. In the remaining study\textsuperscript{31}, CPP-ACP showed the same performance as the placebo.

DISCUSSION

The process of enamel remineralization has been studied for over 100 years. It has been suggested that non invasive treatment of initial caries lesions occurring by means of processes that stimulate remineralization, has been one of the major advances in control of the disease.

Therefore, the appearance of products that have the potential to promote dental remineralization are welcome, however, they need to be evaluated with caution, by means of analysis of the best scientific evidence available.

CPP-ACP has been extensively studied recently. In order to better evaluate its remineralizing potential, this literature review was conducted with the goal of seeking clinical results of the efficacy of this complex in the prevention of caries lesion formation.

Both meta-analyses identified, suggested that further in vivo studies with long follow-up periods should be conducted in order to reduce the uncertainty about the clinical efficacy of CPP-ACP, particularly in comparison with fluoridated compounds.

As regards the in situ studies found, CPP-ACC demonstrated greater efficacy than the placebo in the majority of publications. The greater efficacy of CP-ACP associated with fluoride in comparison with CPP-ACP alone was also demonstrated. In only one study was the superiority of the casein complex verified in comparison with fluoride, considered the standard therapy in the process of dental remineralization.

Whereas, with reference to the in vivo studies, findings with a higher level of scientific evidence, the results were contradictory: CPP-ACP associated with fluoride was at times shown to be more effective, and at times was shown to be similar to the placebo. CPP-ACP alone at times demonstrated greater efficacy, at time demonstrated similarity to placebo, and when compared with F, obtained an equivalent performance.

In view of the data presented, up to the moment, it has not been conclusively demonstrated that CPP-ACP (alone or in association with fluoride) has advantages in comparison with fluoride in the promotion of dental remineralization. Indeed, there are also data that demonstrate clinical similarity of the casein complex in comparison with the placebo.

Moreover, the posology of CPP-ACP was noted to be variable. The best form and frequency of application were not established. This fact strongly influences the comparison of the results found in the studies, which used different polsologies of the product.

In spite of the majority of studies comparing CPP-ACP with a placebo, it is very important for the substance used for comparison to be standard therapy, in this case, fluoridated compounds. Because, in spite of noting the appearance of new products with remineralizing potential, it is not always possible to prove clinical advantages of the new in comparison with existent therapies.

CONCLUSION

A cautious approach is needed when making a general recommendation about the use of CPP-ACP in the prevention of caries, considering that there is no uniformity in the results of studies with a higher level of evidence, with respect to the remineralizing role of the casein complex in clinical practice.

It is suggested that the results of further in vivo studies, with long follow-up be awaited, in order to be able to generalize the benefit demonstrated by CPP-ACP in some patients.

Collaborators

RF PEREIRA conducted the bibliographic review for preparing the introductory part, under the supervision of the author SC LEAL. RF PEREIRA and SC LEAL were involved in developing the search strategies, selection of articles and interpretation of their results. Afterwards, discussions were held about the findings, and the article presented was written.
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Received on: 6/6/2012
Final version resubmitted on: 19/6/2012
Approved on: 19/3/2013