

PREVALENCE OF SELF-REPORTED HALITOSIS IN HONG KONG AND RELATED FACTORS

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Objectives: The aim of this study was to estimate the prevalence of self-reported halitosis (SRH) in the territory of Hong Kong SAR, China. In addition, to identify socio-demographic, oral health, and behavioural factors associated with SRH.

Methods: A quota sample of 450 Chinese adults in Hong Kong SAR, China was recruited from random digit telephone dialing. Through anonymous telephone interview, subjects were interviewed about their self-reported prevalence of halitosis (duration and severity). In addition, information on socio-demographic factors (age, gender, formal education attainment, family income), oral health factors (global rating of oral health, perceived dental caries status, perceived periodontal health status) and behavioural factors (use of dental services, tooth brushing, use of additional oral hygiene aids, smoking and alcohol use).

Results: The prevalence of SRH was 41% (183/450) and most of who reported experiencing halitosis; did so at least once a week (45%, 80/183). The mean severity score of SRH was 3.62 (SD=1.84). SRH was associated with socio-demographic factors: age ($p<0.05$), formal education attainment ($p<0.05$), oral health factors: global rating of oral health ($p<0.001$), perceived dental caries status ($p<0.05$), perceived periodontal health status ($p<0.05$), and behavioural factors: use of dental services ($p<0.05$) and use of additional oral hygiene aids ($p<0.05$).

Conclusion: Halitosis is relatively prevalent in Hong Kong SAR, China, and self-reported halitosis is associated with socio-demographic, oral health and behavioural factors. These findings highlight the halitosis is an underlying public health issue that should be further investigated and managed.