

Deterioration of Oral Function in the Elderly The Position Paper of Japanese Society of Gerodontology in 2016

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Academic Committee

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As Japanese aged society progresses, oral health condition in geriatric population deviated in a wide range from normal to malfunction including oral frailty and “deterioration of oral function”. As the official representatives of geriatric dentistry, we proposed the definition of “deterioration of oral function” in this position paper. This position paper aimed to gather evidence up to this time and to propose tentative diagnostic criteria in order to develop appropriate arguments about this issue efficiently.

“Deterioration of oral function” was expressed from seven oral symptoms : oral uncleanness, oral dryness, decline in occlusal force, decline in motor function of tongue and lips, decline in tongue pressure, decline in chewing function and decline in swallowing function. The criteria of each symptom were determined by the data of previous studies, and “deterioration of oral function” was defined if these criteria were matched in more than three symptoms. This position paper proposed the initial definition of “deterioration of oral function”, but would lead to further studies about this issue from various perspectives. More evidence should be accumulated with further clinical studies to clarify its definition, but we hope this paper presents the first step in the right direction.