

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Oh, Sugar! Rethinking Oral Health in a Sugary World

Alexandria, VA, USA – A symposium examining the wide-ranging effects of sugars on oral health was presented at the 104th General Session of the IADR, which was held in conjunction with the 55th Annual Meeting of the American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research and the 50th Annual Meeting of the Canadian Association for Dental Research on March 25-28, 2026 in San Diego, CA, USA.

Free sugars consumption is among the most influential yet preventable drivers of oral diseases globally. Despite decades of research, new epidemiologic, clinical, and policy data continue to underscore the urgent need to rethink how we address reducing free sugars intake across the life course and within broader food systems. While the "sugar is bad" narrative dominates headlines, dental professionals require actionable data on the real-world implementation effects, measurement strategies, and sustainable industry partnerships that extend beyond taxation approaches.

This symposium brought together global leaders to examine the multifaceted role of sugars in oral health, from the impact on the oral microbiome, oral mucosal maturation, and caries development in early infancy, to the broader industrial and policy determinants that shape consumption patterns. Speakers highlighted cutting-edge research in four interconnected domains: sugars and oral health outcomes, sugar intake in infancy and early life, sugar taxation and policy innovations, and industrial determinants of health. The session concluded with a synthesis of research gaps and priorities, offering a roadmap for translational science, policy, and practice to address free sugar-related oral health disparities.

Organized by Domenick Zero, Indiana University, Indianapolis, USA and Jin Xiao, University of Rochester, NY, USA, the symposium, "Oh, Sugar! Rethinking Oral Health in a Sugary World" took place on Saturday, March 28 at 8 a.m. PDT (UTC-7).

About IADR/AADOOCR

The International Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research (IADR) is a nonprofit organization with a mission to drive dental, oral, and craniofacial research for health and well-being worldwide. IADR represents the individual scientists, clinician-scientists, dental professionals, and students based in academic, government, non-profit, and private-sector institutions who share our mission. The American Association for Dental, Oral, and Craniofacial Research (AADOOCR) is the largest division of IADR. Learn more at www.iadr.org.

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