Journals ON-LINE Publishers since 1933

ISSN 0970-9274
JOURNAL OF HUMAN ECOLOGY
International, Interdisciplinary Journal of Man – Environment Relationship

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PRINT: ISSN 0970-9274 ONLINE: 2456-6608

J. Hum. Ecol., 14(4): 241-248 (2003)
DOI: 10.31901/24566608.2003/14.04.03

Intra- and Inter-tooth Analysis of Hypoplastic and Hypocalcified Enamel Defects

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KEY WORDS Hypoplasia. Hypocalcification. Mesopo-tamia.

ABSTRACT A comparison of the frequency and distribution of hypoplastic and hypocalcification defects in 153 permanent teeth reveals two different patterns. Although intra-tooth variation is consistent with the results of previous studies, inter-tooth patterns of hypoplasia and hypocalcification differ, and suggest that it may be difficult to distinguish developmental from acquired opacities. Two factors may be responsible for acquired opacities: postmortem alteration and antemortem conditions, such as dental calculus or localized trauma. These results indicate that the use of enamel hypocalcification as an indicator of non-specific stress, and hence as a proxy for health of past populations, should be reconsidered.

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