

# Prevalence of oral pathologic findings in an ancient pre-Columbian archeologic site in the Atacama Desert

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**Objective:** To determine the prevalence of oral pathologic findings in an ancient culture that inhabited the Atacama Desert. **Materials and methods:** A systematic examination was performed on the remains of 83 individuals unearthed from a prehistoric burial ground. A total of 57 skeletal remains achieved appropriate inclusion criteria, from which estimated age at death, gender, ante- and postmortem tooth loss, prevalence and location of caries, apical periodontitis sequela, alveolar bone resorption and attrition were recorded. **Results:** From the analyzed skeletal remains (13 male, 22 female and 22 not identifiable), the mean age estimated was  $29.9 \pm 13.8$  years. A total of 89.4% of them presented permanent dentition with a mean ante-mortem tooth loss of 9.0 teeth and a postmortem mean tooth loss of 14.4 teeth per subject. In all, 46.4% of the postmortem remaining permanent teeth ( $n = 237$ ) showed caries lesions. Interproximal caries was most frequently observed (31.5%), followed by occlusal