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Letter to the Editor

Response to “The Prevalence of *Entamoeba gingivalis* and *Trichomonas tenax* in Relation to Periodontal Disease among Patients Attending Dental Clinics in Urmia, Iran: A Cross-Sectional Study”

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Received 25 Jun 2026
Accepted 05 Jul 2026

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Dear Editor-in-Chief

We would like to thank the author of the Letter to the Editor for the interest shown in our published article (1) and for the constructive comments provided.

We respectfully clarify that the objective of our study was to investigate the prevalence of *Entamoeba gingivalis* and *Trichomonas tenax* and their relationship with disease severity and clinical characteristics among patients with periodontitis. The study was not designed as a case-control study comparing patients with

healthy individuals. Our interpretation was therefore focused on the presence of these protozoa among patients with established periodontitis. We did not intend to establish a causal relationship between the protozoa and periodontal disease.

Given the relatively small sample size and, particularly, the limited number of positive cases for *T. tenax* (15 cases), we considered that multivariable regression could produce unstable estimates and potentially misleading results. The primary purpose of the statistical



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analysis was to explore associations between the detected protozoa and the demographic and clinical characteristics of the study population. Chi-square and Fisher's exact tests were therefore used as appropriate for the available data. We agree that the findings should be interpreted in the context of the sample size and exploratory nature of the analysis.

The *P* value of 0.063 reported in the Discussion was a typographical error. The correct *P* value is 0.037, as reported in Table 5. This error does not affect the underlying data or the other findings of the study.

The very small number of participants in some categories limits the reliability and interpretation of statistical estimates for these variables. Fisher's exact test was used where appropriate because of the small cell frequencies. These variables were nevertheless retained in the analysis because they were among the clinical and demographic characteristics collected from the study participants. The corresponding findings should be considered exploratory and interpreted with appropriate caution.

Our statement regarding the higher sensitivity of molecular methods was based on the substantially higher detection rate obtained by PCR compared with direct microscopic exam-

ination in the same clinical samples. We acknowledge that a formal assessment of diagnostic sensitivity would require an appropriate reference standard and diagnostic accuracy analysis. Regarding causality, our intention was not to establish a causal relationship. The wording “suggesting” and “potentially” was used to indicate an association and a possible role that warrants further investigation. In addition, the limitations of the cross-sectional design were explicitly acknowledged in the manuscript.

Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Reference

1. Azadeh Y, Khademvatan S, Goharfar Z, Shahrabi-Farahani S, Jafari R. The Prevalence of *Entamoeba gingivalis* and *Trichomonas tenax* in Relation to Periodontal Disease among Patients Attending Dental Clinics in Urmia, Iran: A Cross-Sectional Study. *Iran J Parasitol.* 2026;21(2):247-257.