

Squamous Cell Carcinoma of The Tongue in A Developing Community



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Abstract

Squamous cell carcinoma of the tongue is characterized by malignant cells which show squamous differentiation in the direction of "formation of keratin and/or the presence of intercellular bridges." As single case reports have appeared in the literature recently, this paper presents a good number of them traced among the Ibo ethnic group in Nigeria, this being facilitated by the author who heads an institution that provides a histopathology data pool.

Keywords: Tongue; Malignancy; Squamous cell carcinoma; Epidemiology; Developing community

Introduction

Squamous cell carcinoma is defined as "a malignant epithelial neoplasm exhibiting squamous differentiation as characterized by the formation of keratin and/or the presence of intercellular bridges" [1]. This was illustrated in a case report from India [1] as well as from Saudi Arabia [2] and from the UK [3]. Therefore, this paper presents a series from the Ibo ethnic group's developing community [4], this being done on account of the author's headship of a histopathology data pool such as the one fostered by a Birmingham (UK) group [5]. To facilitate matters, the tabular form is used as shown hereunder.

Results

Table 1

Table 1: Epidemiological distribution by age.

Age range	Male	Female	Total
< 40	1	1	2
41-50	2	2	4
51-60	1	2	3
61-70	3	2	5
71+	1	-	1
Total	8	7	15

Table 2: Site of involvement.

Site	No
Side	5
Posterior 1/3	4
Dorsum	2
Base	1

Half	1
Not stated	2
Total	15

Table 2

In contrast, only few of the published cases designated the sites, including

- 1) Side
- 2) Lateral border
- 3) Margin.

Discussion

Wide interest in squamous cell carcinomas of the tongue is shown in the publications which have appeared recently in countries as far apart as China [6], France [7], UK [8] and USA [9,10]. Therefore, the local cohort ought to be compared with them. In this context, the mean age was given as 60 years from India [1]. Age stands out. The Chinese group was aged 28 to 88 years, but the mean age was not apparent [6]. The local cohort was aged 34 years to 79 years (mean 56 years). As to sex, the local cohort was almost equal. It was disparate in China to the tune of 102 males to 83 females [6]. What stood out was a rare histological variant. It was reported from Spain [11]. It turned out to be the infrequent and aggressive "spindle cell type" that featured in a 11-year-old boy.

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