Title: Primary melanoma of the oral cavity

Authors: Rana Attaran: Assistant Professor, Sanaz Helli: Post graduated student

Abstract: Background and Objective: Melanoma is a malignant neoplasm of melanocytic origin. In contrast to cutaneous melanoma, it does not have a defined set of clinical and pathologic classification criteria. Primary melanoma of the oral cavity is the most malignant tumor among head and neck tumors.

Search method: An indexed search in the Pubmed and Google Scholar databases was carried out with the keywords "primary melanoma", "oral melanoma", "malignant melanoma". We established limitations that the literature had to have been published after the year 2001 and written in English.

Findings: Inside the oral cavity, 80% are located in the maxilla, preferentially in the palatal mucosa. Although its etiology is unknown, occasionally it forms over a preexisting melanosis of prolonged evolution; tobacco use and chronic irritation may play some role. In the vast majority of cases it is asymptomatic during years and it is usually detected as a pigmented mass which is sometimes painful. Clinically, OMM (Oral Malignant Melanoma) may mimic other pigmented lesions. A biopsy is required in order to establish the diagnosis. The reported risk of malignant cells spreading during invasive procedures and factors such as size of the lesion or anatomical limitations may influence the diagnostic surgical procedure. Therapy of OMM is commonly based on surgical excision of the primary tumor, supplemented by radiotherapy, with chemotherapy and immunotherapy serving as adjuncts. Prognosis is poor, with a 5-year survival rate of approximately 15%.

Conclusions: Because late diagnosis and advanced disease at the time of diagnosis are the only sure predictors of outcome, thorough clinical and pathologic workup of any suspected melanotic lesion should be carried out to diagnose OMM. Early diagnosis and aggressive multimodal treatment are the only means available to surgeons to provide better outcome to patients with OMM.

oral malignant melanoma, diagnosis criteria, treatment

Presentation: Poster