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The prevalence of tonque lesions in the outpatients of Kementah Dental Centre

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Introduction

Tongue has been considered as a good reflection of systemic disease since Hippocrates time. In Chinese traditional medicine, tongue is examined for every patient disregard of the complaint. However, localized tongue lesions are more commonly encountered than the manifestation of systemic disease.

Objectives

There is no data regarding the prevalence of tongue lesions in Malaysian population. Therefore, the aim of this study was to assess the prevalence of tongue lesions in the outpatients of Kementah Dental Centre, Kuala Lumpur and relate the data obtained to smoking habit and medication taken.

Tongue Pathology	Description
Hairy tongue	Hairy tongue is diagnosed when filiform papilla were elongated more than 3 mm (Avcu *et al*, 1999).
Coated tongue	Coated tongue is diagnosed when the dorsum surface of the tongue was covered with debris and the length of the filiform papilla was less than 3 mm (Avcu *et al*, 1999).
Fissured tongue	Fissured tongue is diagnosed when there is/are fissures in the dorsum surface of the anterior two thirds of the tongue (van Der Waal and Pindborg, 1986).
Geographic tongue	Geographic tongue is characterized by a loss of the filiform papilla in one or multiple areas of dorsum surface of tongue (Giunta, 1989).
Median rhomboid glossitis	This is referred to a rhomboid or oval shaped atrophic glossits changes in the dorsal midline of tongue, just anterior to the foramen cecum (van Der Waal and Pindborg, 1986).
Crenation tongue	This is diagnosed when there is scalloping or crenation along the lingual periphery of the tongue (McDonald, 1974).
Ankyloglossia	This refers to the partial or complete attachment of the tongue to the floor of mouth (Giunta, 1989).

Tab. 1

Material and Methods

A total of 200 consecutive walked in patients (89 males, 112 females, aged 10-59 years, mean age 34.2) were examined during the period of July - September 2009 in Kementah Dental Centre, Kuala Lumpur. Patient with appointment was excluded from the study The oral examination was performed in a dental surgery with plain mouth mirrors under artificial light by the author.

Results

Tongue lesions was found in 90 of the 200 examined subjects with 13 (6.5%) subjects presented with more than one lesions, 4 have coated and fissured tongue; 4 with coated and crenation tongue; 2 presented with crenation tongue and partial angkyloglossia; 2 with fissured and crenation tongue, and one with fissured and partial angkyloglossia. Coated tongue was the commonest tongue lesion found with a prevalence of 45%, followed by crenation tongue (30%), partial ankyloglossia (21%), fissured tongue (18 %), geographic tongue (7%), and hairy tongue (2%). 43 (21.5%) of the subjects were smokers. Only 13 (6.5%) of the subjects were taking medications, mostly oral contraceptive pills.

Fig. 1: Ankyloglossia

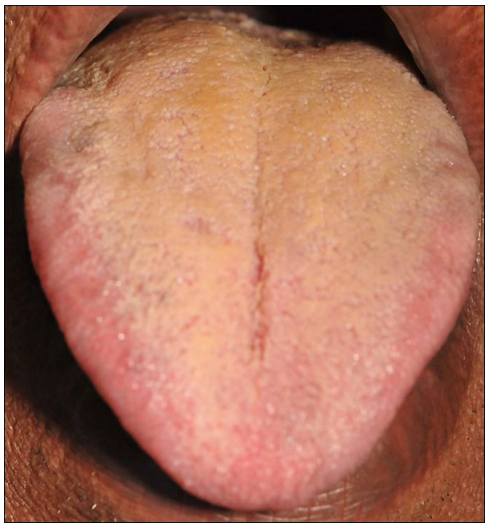

Fig. 2: Coated tongue

Fig. 3: Crenation and fissured tongue

Fig. 4: Fissured tongue

Fig. 5: Geographic tongue

Fig. 6: Normal tongue

Conclusions

The prevalence of tongue lesions in this survey is 45% with coated tongue as the commonest which in turn were seen mostly in smokers (73% of male coated tongue were smokers), as with the study of Avcu and Kanli (2003). The present study shows tongue lesion was more common in men (55% in male compared to 35% in female) which is in accordance with Avcu and Kanli's study in Turkey but in Byahatti and Ingafou's study in Libyan, both genders were almost equally affected. No specific tongue lesion was seen in patients who are taking medications due to small sample size.

Literature

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