Primary oral tuberculosis in a sexagenarian female

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DESCRIPTION

A 61-year-old female patient reported with pain in the right-middle third of the face and associated swelling since 3 months. On eliciting history, patient had undergone extraction of maxillary right anterior teeth following which patient experienced pain (figure 1). Fifteen days later, swelling appeared in the same area with pain, which was gradual in onset and intermittent. Extraoral examination revealed a solitary swelling roughly 1 cm in diameter present on the right side of the face below the ala of the nose. Intraoral examination revealed vestibular obliteration in relation to right maxillary canine. Orthopantomogram, intraoral periapical radiograph of maxillary right anterior region and chest radiograph were inconclusive (figures 2–4). Ziehl-Neelsen stain was negative whereas Mantoux test was positive. Histopathological examination revealed a presence of caseation necrosis (figure 5), areas of epitheloid cells and Langhans cells (figure 6), which were suggestive of tuberculosis. Positive polymerised chain reaction results confirmed the presence of Mycobacterium tuberculosis in the tissue samples. Based on the results of above investigations, diagnosis of primary tuberculosis was carried out.

Oral tuberculosis accounts for 0.05–1.5%. Primary lesions develop when tuberculosis bacilli are directly inoculated into the oral tissues from an exogenous source. Common sites are gingiva, vestibular mucosa and extraction sockets. 1, 2 Positive tuberculin skin test indicates previous exposure to M tuberculosis. Although presumptive diagnosis of oral tuberculosis can be made on clinical and radiographic features, histopathological examination and microbiological analysis are required to confirm the diagnosis. 3–5

Figure 1 Intraoral clinical image.

Figure 2 Orthopantomogram.

Figure 3 Intraoral periapical radiograph of maxillary right anterior region.

Figure 4 Chest radiograph.
tuberculosis is based on histopathological examination and identification of the bacilli in tissues using Ziehl-Neelsen stain. Hence, oral manifestations must be properly recognised if the patient is to receive appropriate diagnosis and referral for treatment.

Learning points

▸ Tuberculosis is among the top three causes of death for women, and should be considered.
▸ Consider primary oral tuberculosis as one among the differential diagnosis.
▸ Mandatory histopathological examination for every lesion.

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REFERENCES