

# Isolated subglossopalatal membrane: a rare entity to encounter

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## DESCRIPTION

Subglossopalatal membrane is a fibrous connection extending from the floor of the mouth to the palate. There are case reports of this condition being associated with other congenital anomalies and syndromes.<sup>1 2</sup> However, isolated subglossopalatal membrane has never been reported in the literature. Earlier, it was believed to be a surgical emergency; however, a recent report has shown that surgical outcome is better if the newborn is stabilised with primary management.<sup>3</sup> This comprises supplemental oxygen, antibiotics and intravenous fluid followed by surgical excision.<sup>3</sup>

A 2-day-old full-term male neonate presented to the Department of Paediatric Surgery, King George's Medical University, with a membrane detected incidentally by the mother during feeding. The patient did not have any evidence of respiratory distress. On examination, there was a membrane extending from the floor of the mouth to the junction of the soft and hard palate (figures 1 and 2). Lateral extension was from the right molar trigone to the left molar trigone. There was a small rent in the middle of the membrane. Respiratory distress probably did not occur due to this defect. This subglossopalatal membrane was an isolated congenital anomaly in this patient.



**Figure 1** Subglossopalatal membrane.



**Figure 2** Attachment of subglossopalatal membrane to hard palate.

## Learning points

- ▶ Presence of subglossopalatal membrane in isolation is an extremely rare anomaly.
- ▶ In cases of complete subglossopalatal membrane, it may present as acute respiratory distress in newborns.
- ▶ Splitting of the membrane or a natural rent decreases the severity of respiratory distress.

**Competing interests** None declared.

**Patient consent** Obtained.

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