SARS-COV2 Associated Oral Lesions- A Review

Das Moumalini¹#, Banerjee Abhishek¹†, Singh Dharvind Kumar¹‡, Karar Chandan Kumar¹¥ and Abhinandan¹##

¹Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology, Awadh Dental College and Hospital, Jamshedpur, Jharkhand, India.

Authors’ contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Article Information

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(1) Dr. Farzaneh Mohamadpour, University of Sistan and Baluchestan, Iran.
(2) Dmitry Bulgin, Research Institute of Medical Primatology, Russia.
(3) Paola Berenice Zarate Segura, Instituto Politécnico Nacional, Mexico.
(4) Manlio Santilli, Università Degli Studi Gabriele d’Annunzio di Chieti-Pescara, Italy.
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ABSTRACT

Introduction: COVID-19 disease is caused by SARS-CoV-2 virus and it was declared pandemic by World Health Organization (WHO) on March 11, 2020. The coronavirus infection has an affinity for ACE2 receptors and by attaching to them, the virus enters the host cells. Along with many body organs like lungs, kidney, liver, upper respiratory tract, nervous system, skeletal muscles, ACE2 concentration is also found in abundance in epithelial cells of tongue and salivary glands.

Materials and Methods: Recent studies, researches, documents and case reports published in the world medical literature in the year 2020-2021 were searched and documented in our study. The search engines used were PUBMED, google scholar, WEB OF SCIENCE etc.

Results: Dysgeusia, xerostomia, sore throat, aphthous and herpetiform ulcers, candidiasis, enanthema, Kawasaki like lesions were the most common among various oral manifestations. Others include plaque like changes, gingival inflammation, necrotizing gingivitis, erythema multiforme, angina-bulloso like lesions, Melkersson-Rosenthal Syndrome, Oral mucormycosis etc. The sites of infection mainly include tongue, gingiva, hard and soft palate, buccal and labial mucosa etc.

# Post Graduate Trainee
† Reader
‡ Assistant Professor
¥ Assistant Professor
## Professor and PG Guide
*Corresponding author: E-mail: abhishek.banerjee376@gmail.com;
Conclusion: The etiopathogenesis of such lesions cannot be directly correlated with COVID-19 and factors such as stress, immunosuppression, co-infections, secondary lesions, opportunistic infections, systemic diseases, poor oral hygiene etc. must be considered. Management of stress is an important factor. In this review article various oral lesions are discussed in COVID-19 infection states in detail. The importance of earliest diagnosis of oral lesions is to be kept in mind to prevent further complications.

Keywords: COVID-19; SARS-CoV-2 virus; ACE2 receptors; oral lesions; oral manifestations.

1. INTRODUCTION

Coronavirus disease 19 (COVID-19) is caused by newly discovered novel coronavirus Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The WHO declared the disease as global pandemic last year on March 11, 2020 [1] and potentially a life-threatening respiratory disease. It was identified in December 2019 after its outbreak in China (Wuhan) [1,2].

It presents as a lot of symptoms among whom fever, sneezing, dry cough, shortness of breath, taste alteration, anosmia, fatigue are characteristic [3,4]. It may worsen to fulminating pneumonia and severe respiratory distress if not treated early in many cases [5]. Mostly present as mild, some are moderate and severe and a little percentage as critically ill, even some are asymptomatic also [4,6]. Surprisingly, the features are different for every other person and the course of the disease depends majorly on the immunity of the patient affected. It can spread from an infected patient via droplets mainly through oral, nasal and eye mucous secretions [2]. It has an incubation period of 1 to 14 days, mostly between (3-7) days [2].

RT-PCR (Reverse Transcriptase Polymerase Chain Reaction) test from oropharynx is considered an effective method for detection of SARS-CoV-2 from human saliva and its sensitivity is higher than nasopharyngeal test [7].

The coronavirus disease results in various oral/opharyngeal manifestations which may be either a direct effect of the disease or may be secondary to any underlying disease, immune status following COVID-19 infection, or any drugs used for treatment of the same [6].

The most common oropharyngeal features seen are dysgeusia, sore throat and xerostomia [7,8]. Dysgeusia, ageusia and anosmia are inflammation induced symptoms of COVID-19 [9]. Among others, aphthous ulcers, herpetiform ulcers, candidiasis, cheilitis, white plaque, blisters, petechiae, enanthema, geographic tongue, fissured tongue, desquamative gingivitis, vesiculobullous lesions, mucormycosis, angina-bullosa like lesions, erythema-multiforme like lesions, Kawasaki-like lesions (in children with Kawasaki disease) have also been reported [4,6]. Although whether these symptoms are a direct manifestation of SARS-CoV-2 virus or they carry a different etiopathogenesis is yet to be known [4,5].

The most common intraoral sites of infection are the various parts of tongue, gingiva, hard and soft palate, buccal and labial mucosa, oropharynx, tonsillar pillar etc. and each one has different presentation.

Patients suffering from coronavirus disease suffer from stress and therefore oral hygiene maintenance is sometimes neglected. Many bacteria, virus, fungus may be found alongside normal commensals like Streptococci, Fusobacterium, Treponema, Prevotella intermedia, Candida species etc. [10] Therefore, bacterial co-infection, stress, lack of oral hygiene, immunosuppression, co-morbidities must also be considered.

Oral lesion presentation due to the virus is a broad classification and must not be neglected [7]. More clinical evidence and research are needed to establish the co-relation between SARS-CoV-2 and intraoral manifestations [3].
Table 1. Shows description of oral lesions in a broader way with age, gender, site, etiology, treatment, reported diagnosis, histopathology etc. from each of the articles with author/journal name

| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|------------------|--------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|------------------------|----------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Oral Diseases, 2020 | Milagros Díaz Rodríguez | 43 | F | yes | Aphthous like lesions, burning sensation, tongue depapillation | Tongue | Last 2 weeks | Immunosuppression, Stress | Mouthrinse (Triamcinolone acetonide 0.05%) | Aphthous-like lesions. | - |
| Oral Diseases, 2020 | Milagros Díaz Rodríguez | 53 | M | yes | Burning sensation, unilateral commissural fissures, dysgeusia | Lip | After hospital discharge | Immunosuppression, Stress | Ointment (Neomycin, Nystatin, Triamcinolone acetonide) | Commissural Chelitis | - |
| Oral Diseases, 2020 | Milagros Díaz Rodríguez | 78 | F | yes | Intense dry mouth, lesions | Tongue, Hard palate, Soft palate, Lip | Since hospitalization | Immunosuppression, Stress | Solutions and gels, Nystatin rinse, Neomycin, Triamcinolone acetonide | Pseudomembranous Candidiasis and Angular Chelitis | - |
| Oral Diseases, 2020 | Carme n Martín Carrera-s-Presas | 56 | M | Suspected | Pain in palate, sore throat Multiple orange coloured lesions with | Palate | After sending home | Emotional distress | Valacyclovir 500mg, topical antiseptic | Herpetic recurrent stomatitis | - |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|------------------------|----------|-----------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Oral Diseases, 2020 | Carmen Martin Carreras-Presas | 58 | M | Suspected | Pain and multiple small, pinpoint, yellowish ulcers unilaterally with an erythematous halo | Palate | - | Underlying disease, Emotional distress | Topical antiseptic mouthwash | Herpetic infection? | - |
| Oral Diseases, 2020 | Carmen Martin Carreras-Presas | 65 | F | Yes | Pain in tongue, blisters (pruritic than painful), bulla, desquamative gingivitis | Tongue, Internal lip mucosa | After 1 month | Underlying disease, Emotional distress | Hyaluronic acid, chlorhexidine mouthwash, prednisolone 30mg | Erythema multiforme | - |
| Journal of Dental Research, 2020 | Juliana Amorim dos Santos | 67 | M | Yes | White plaque associated with multiple pinpoint yellowish ulcers, Nodule (1cm), atrophic areas surrounded by an elevated | Tongue, Lower lip | 24th day of hospitalization | Secondary lesions due to deterioration of systemic health and treatments due to Covid-19 | Fluconazole, oral nystatin, chlorhexidine gluconate (0.12%), alcohol free mouthrinse, | Herpetic recurrent oral lesions associated with Candidiasis, Fibroma, Geographic tongue | - |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|------------------------|----------|-----------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery, 2020 | Ameen Biadse e2 | 36.25 | - | Yes | yellow-white halo | Tongue, palate, gingiva | - | - | hydrogen peroxide | - |
| Oral Diseases, 2020 | Saygo Tomo37 | 37 | F | Yes | Dysgeusia, burning mouth sensation, dry mouth. Diffuse erythema with some petechia and discrete depapillation | Borders of the tongue | From beginning | oral mucositis due to a mucosal hypersensitivity to the presence of the SARS-CoV-2 in the epithelium | Hydration, chlorhexidine mouthwashes(0.12%) | Oral mucositis |
| Oral Diseases, 2021 | Jay Patel11 | 35 | F | suspected | severe halitosis, generalized erythematous and edematous gingivae, and necrotic | Gingiva, interdental papillae | After 3 days | Bacterial co-infection | Metronidazole 400mg, chlorhexidine mouthwash(0.12%) | Necrotizing gingivitis |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|------------------------|----------|-----------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Dermatology Ther     | FilizCebeci Kahraman* | 51                | M      | yes       | interdental papillae in both the maxillary and mandibular labial sextants, bleeding gums. Bilateral submandibular lymphadenopathy | interdental papillae in both the maxillary and mandibular labial sextants, bleeding gums. Bilateral submandibular lymphadenopathy | Inability to taste, Sore throat, largely erythematous surface, a few petechiae in the midline and numerous pustular enanthema, more prominent on the left side, 1-3 mm in diameter | Oropharynx, hard palate, soft palate | From beginning to after 10 days | Oropharyngeal involvement is probable with Covid-19 | Enanthema, Diffuse oropharyngeal erythema, petechia, and pustule formation |
| Journal of Gianfranco | 63(mean value) | M & F | Yes (Moderate) | Pain, Burning, Bleeding, Tongue, gingiva | Maximum appeared | Pain, Burning, Bleeding, Tongue, gingiva | Maximum appeared | Probably pre- | Hyaluronic acid, Oral lesions in superficial band-like | | |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|------------------------|----------|-----------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Clinical Medicine, 2021 | Favia | 74 (mean value) | M & F (Severe) | Yes | Taste disorders, Difficulty to chewing and swallowing, Geographic tongue, Fissured tongue, Ulcerative lesion, Blisters, Hyperplasia of papillae, Angina bullosa, Candidiasis Ulcero-necrotic gingivitis, Petechiae | | with in 1 week and before Covid-19 specific therapies | existing conditions, Sars-CoV-2-related & Treatment-related lesions, Lesions related to poor oral hygiene | chlorhexidine mouthwash or gel 2%, Miconazole nitrate, Topical tranexamic acid | half of the cases occurred in early stages of Covid-19. Therefore, the presence of oral lesions could represent an initial sign of peripheral thrombosis | lichenoid appearance of the inflammatory infiltrate with prominent vascular hyperplasia. Thrombosis of sub-epithelial and deeper vessels, etc. |
| Journal of Clinical Medicine, 2021 | Gianfranco Favia | | | | Pain, Burning, Bleeding, Taste disorders, Difficulty to chewing and swallowing, Geographic tongue, Fissured tongue, Tongue, gingiva, palate | Maximum appeared within 1 week and before Covid-19 specific therapies | Probably pre-existing conditions, Sars-CoV-2-related & Treatment-related lesions, Lesions | Hyaluronic acid, chlorhexidine mouthwash or gel 2%, Miconazole nitrate, Topical tranexaminate | Oral lesions in half of the cases occurred in early stages of Covid-19. Therefore, the presence | superficial band-like lichenoid appearance of the inflammatory infiltrate with prominent vascular hyperplasia. Thrombosis |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|------------------------|----------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| *Moumalini et al.*; *JPRI*, 33(47B): 431-468, 2021; Article no. *JPRI*.75411 | *Gianfranco Favia* | 81 (mean value) | M & F | Yes (Critical) | Ulcerative lesion, Blisters, Hyperplasia of papillae, Angina bullosa, Candidiasis, Ulcero-necrotic gingivitis, Petechiae | Gingiva, tongue, palate | Maximum appeared after 1 week or after therapies | Probably pre-existing conditions, Sars-CoV-2-related & Treatment-related lesions, Lesions related to poor oral hygiene | Hyaluronic acid, chlorhexidine mouthwash or gel 2%, Miconazole nitrate, Topical tranexamic acid | Oral lesions in half of the cases occurred in early stages of Covid-19. Therefore, the presence of oral lesions could represent an initial sign of peripheral thrombosis | superficial band-like lichenoid appearance of the inflammatory infiltrate with prominent vascular hyperplasia. Thrombosis of sub-epithelial and deeper vessels, etc. |
| *Internal Medicine, 2021* | *Miguel* | 43 | F | Yes | Aphthous | Right | After 4 days | Cytokine | - | - | - |

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| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|------------------------|----------|-----------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Oral Journal of Dermatology, 2020 | Miguel Dominiguez-Santas | 33 | M | Yes | Aphthous ulcer (1 in number) | Buccal mucosa | Storm due to Covid-19 | - | Oral aphthous ulcers |
| International Journal of Dermatology, 2020 | Miguel Dominiguez-Santas | 37 | M | Yes | Aphthae (7 in number) | Ventral right side of tongue mucosa | Cytokine storm due to Covid-19 | - | Oral aphthous ulcers |
| International Journal of Dermatology, 2020 | Miguel Dominiguez-Santas | 19 | M | Yes | Clustered Aphthae (4 in number) | Right side of inferior labial mucosa | Cytokine storm due to Covid-19 | - | Oral aphthous ulcers |
| Cell Proliferation, 2020 | Lili Chen | 52 (mean age) | M & F | Yes | Amblygeustia, dry mouth, dryness and inflammation of mouth, enlargement of lymph nodes in submandibula | Oral cavity | SARS-CoV-2 could cause partial impairment of oral tissues. Change in | - | Oral symptoms may be frequently manifested by COVID-19 patients | - | - |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|----------|-------------|------|------------------------|----------|-----------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| The Journal of the American Dental Association, 2021 | Steven Halepas | 7.8 (mean age) | M & F | Yes | Swelling, redness, cracking of labial mucosa, Red strawberry tongue appearing as hyperplastic papilla against an erythematous dorsal tongue. White strawberry tongue presenting as hyperplastic papilla against a white coating of the dorsal tongue. | Labial mucosa, Tongue | At the time of admission | Psychological status, poor oral hygiene or microbiota imbalance caused by therapeutic drugs | Post-viral inflammation reaction | | |

The presence of oral or oropharyngeal changes may be early indicators of Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) in the setting of COVID-19 infection.
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|------------------------|----------|-----------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Oral Surg Oral Med Oral Pathol Oral Radiol 2021 | Monique Abreu Pauli | 50 | F | Yes | Painful, A deep ulcerated lesion located at the center of the hard palate (over the midline). The bone was exposed, and the lesion measured around 2 cm at the widest diameter. The lesion was surrounded by an erythematous halo, the borders appeared lobulated, and focal areas were swollen. | Hard palate | After 8 days | Debilitating condition from poorly controlled diabetes, acute inflammatory immune response due to Covid-19, Covid-19 related oral manifestation | Incisional biopsy, Antibiotics, NSAIDs, Tramadol, anti-septic mouthwash, Intravenous Amphotericin B with hydrocortisone | Oral Mucormycosis | Heavy mixed acute and chronic inflammatory infiltrate with necrosis and large non-septate, thin-walled fungal hyphae that branch at a 90° angle. The microorganisms are aggregated around blood vessels |
| Med Oral Patol Oral Cir Bucal. 2020 | Ciro Da Soares Santos | 42 | M | Yes | Painful ulceration, multiple reddish macules of different sizes | Buccal mucosa, hard palate, tongue, lips | Thrombotic vasculopathy due to SARS-COV-2 | Biopsy done, 3 weeks follow up | Primary reaction due to SARS-COV-2 | Epithelium demonstrating vacuolization and haemorrhage in the |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|------------------------|----------|-----------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Spec Care Dentist. 2020 | Robert o Onner Cruz Tapia | 41 | F | Yes | Erythematous bulla of 6 mm of soft consistency nonbleeding bulla | Hard palate | During quarantine time | Associate d with COVID-19 | - | Angina bullosahemorrhagic-like lesion |
| Spec Care Dentist. 2020 | Robert o Onner Cruz Tapia | 51 | F | Yes | Diffuse vascular-like purple macule on the left palatal mucosa of 12 mm size and papule-plaque of 8 mm on the right palatal mucosa, and | Palatal mucosa | - | Associate d with COVID-19 | - | Vascular disorder |

superficial portion of the lamina propria, with hyperaemic vessels. Lymphocytic infiltration in the connective tissue and different-sized thrombi
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|------------------------|----------|-----------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Spec Care Dentist. 2020 | Robert Onner Cruz Tapia | 55 | F | Yes | Asymptomatic purple bulla of 8 mm diameter and soft consistency on the right side of tongue | Tongue | During quarantine time | Associated with COVID-19 | - | Angina bullosa hemorrhagic-like lesion | - |
| Spec Care Dentist. 2020 | Robert Onner Cruz Tapia | 42 | M | Yes | Burning sensation, multiple and irregular reddish macules of 3-4mm in diameter with indurated consistency | Hard palate | From beginning | Associated with COVID-19 | Topical Mometason furoate 0.1% in solution after oral hygiene, chlorhexidine 0.12% mouthwash, Incisional Biopsy | Mucosal nonspecific localized vasculitis and thrombosis | Squamous parakeratinized stratified epithelium with paranuclear and cytoplasmic vacuolization in the spinous layer, marked hemorrhage and vascular congestion with focal thrombi formation in the stroma |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|------------------|-------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|------------------------|----------|-----------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| *International Journal of Infectious Diseases*, 2020 | Jairo Corchuelo | 40 | F | Yes | Petechiae on the lower lip, canker sores on the lateral edge of the tongue and attached gingiva of tooth 34, whitish spots on the dorsum of the tongue with greater concentration in the posterior ventral area, melanin pigmentation in the gingiva bonded to previous teeth, | Tongue, Lip, Gingiva | Result of inflammatory processes, frequent use of antibiotics or alterations in the immune response | Ibuprofen, Vitamin D, Azithromycin, Mouthwash, Nystatin | Mild Oral Candidiasis, thrombocytopenia due to Ibuprofen, postinflammatory hyperpigmentation | with prominent erythrocyte extravasation and chronic inflammatory cells |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|-----------------------|----------|-----------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Oral Diseases, 2020 | Reza Ansari       | 56                | F      | Yes       | Painful ulcers with irregular margins and varying sizes in red and non-hemorrhagic background. | Entire hard palate | After 5 days | Stress, mucosal ulcer due to COVID-19 | Incisional Biopsy, topical medication (mixture of diphenhydramine, dexamethasone, tetracycline, and lidocaine) | Oral stress and aphthous ulcers | Tissue diffuse edema with mucosal desquamation, along with granulation and ulceration under the mucosa with invasion of mononuclear cells with large and glassy nuclei. Neutrophilic cell invasion was also seen following secondary bacterial infection. |
| Oral Diseases, 2020 | Reza Ansari       | 75                | M      | Yes       | Dysphagia, Several painful small ulcers, with | Anterior of the tongue | 1 week after hospitalization | Stress, mucosal ulcer due to COVID-19 | Incisional Biopsy, topical medication | Oral stress and aphthous ulcers | Tissue diffuse edema with mucosal... |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|------------------------|----------|-----------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology, 2020 | Sudip Indu | 17 | M | Yes | Painful, burning, itching sensation, Irregular, shallow, round to oval in shape ulcer(0.5mm×0.5mm) with erythematous | Unilatera l, Lower left labial mucosa, left antero-ventral surface of tongue | Before 2 days | Could be an initial manifestation of the coronaviru s disease process | Betadine gargling, warm water drinking, ascorbic acid, zinc suppleme nts | Herpes zoster infection | desquamatio n, along with granulation and ulceration under the mucosa with invasion of mononuclear cells with large and glassy nuclei. Neutrophilic cell invasion was also seen following secondary bacterial infection. |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|------------------------|----------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| JAMA Dermatology, 2020 | Juan Jimenez-Cauhe | 40-69 | M=2 F=4 | Yes | halo, Well-circumscribed ulcer Macule, petechiae | Palate | Before 2 days - After (2-24) days | Enanthem due to COVID-19 | Azithromycin, corticosteroids, hydroxychloroquine, lopinavir, ritonavir, tocumab | Enanthema - |
| Clinical and Experimental Dermatology, 2020 | Juan Jimenez-Cauhe | 66.75 (58-77) | F=4 | Yes | Macule, petechiae | Palate | 19.5 Erythema-multiforme like | Azithromycin, ceftriaxone, corticosteroids, hydroxychloroquine, ritonavir/lopinavir | Erythema-multiforme like | a normal basket-weave stratum corneum, and mild to moderate spongiosis in epidermis, dermis-dilated vessels filled with neutrophils, extravasation of red blood cells, lymphocytic perivascular |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|------------------------|----------|-----------|------------------|--------------------------|
| Clinical and Experim ental Dermatology, 2020 | T. Kamm erer | 46 | M | Yes | Painful ulceration in the mouth, multiple sharply circumscribed ulcerations of the oral mucosa covered by yellow–grey membranes, sub- mandibular lymphadenitis, medical history of recurrent herpes labialis infection | Right side of buccal mucosa | 3 days after extubation | Covid-19 infection, prolonged inpatient care, stress, immunosuppression | Azithromycin, meropenem, acyclovir | Secondary herpetic gingivostomatitis | and interstitial infiltrate etc. multiple nuclei with herpes simplex virus 1/2 antibodies after immunohistochemical staining. |
| Hospital Pediatrics, 2020 | Veena G. Jones | 6 | F | Yes | Cracked lip, prominent papilla in tongue | Lip, tongue | After 2 days | Kawasaki-like | Intravenous immunoglobulin, acetylsalicylic acid, corticosteroids | Kawasaki disease with concurrent COVID-19 infection | - |
| Eur. J. Pediat. | Mazzotta & F. | 9 | M | IgG(+) | Chelitis, glossitis | Lip, tongue | After 3 weeks | Due to COVID-19 | Corticosteroids | Kawasaki-like | - |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|------------------------|----------|-----------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Dermatol. 2020 S. Karger AG, Basel 2020 | Narges Malih | 38 | M | Yes | Erythema, aphthous ulcer, painful, loss of taste | Left Tonsil | After 3 days | Acetaminophen | Covid-19 disease with cutaneous presentation |
| Ann Rheum Dis 2020 | Pouletty | 10 (mean age) | M=8 F=8 | 69% (+) | Cracked lip | Lip | - | Associated with COVID-19 | Intravenous immunoglobulin, corticosteroids etc. | Kawasaki disease |
| Pediatric Cardiology, 2020 | Joanne S. Chi | 10 | M | Yes | Cracked lip, erythema | Lip, oropharynx | - | - | Kawasaki disease and myocarditis | - |
| International Journal of Dermatology, 2020 | Nessa Aghaza deh | 9 | F | Yes | Vesicles, erosions | Lip, anterior tongue, buccal mucosa | Coincident | Cutaneous manifestation of COVID-19 disease, COVID-19 related dermatosis | Acetaminophen | Herpetiform Skin lesions show vascular microthrombi and lymphocytic vasculitis. |
| J Eur Acad Dermatol Venereol 2020 | P. Labé | 3 | M | - | Chelitis, glossitis, stomatitis | Lip, tongue, oral cavity | - | COVID-19 associated | Intravenous immunoglobulin | Kawasaki-like |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|------------------------|---------|----------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| J EurAcad Dermatol Venereol. 2020 | P. Labé | 6 | M | Yes | Erosion, chelitis, hemorrhagic crust, painful | Lip, gingiva | After 7 days | COVID-19 associated | - | Erythema-multiforme like | - |
| J EurAcad Dermatol Venereol. 2020 | Banu Taşkin | 61 | F | Yes | Minor aphthous ulcer | Hard palate, buccal mucosa | - | Exaggerated neutrophilic response due to COVID-19 | hydroxychloroquine, azithromycin, oseltamivir,tocilizumab, favipiravir, hydroxychloroquine, azithromycin, oseltamivir | Erythema nodosum like Sweet Syndrome | Predominant cells in inflammatory infiltration-neutrophils |
| Oral Surg Oral Med Oral Pathol Oral Radiol. 2020 | Thais Bianca Branda | 81 | M | Yes | Dysgeusia, Clustered ulcers 1 to 1.5 cm in diameter covered with crusts. They are covered with a mucopurulent membrane and the so-called aphthous-like pattern Ulcerative painful lesions | Lower lip(velopilion), anterior dorsal tongue | Last few days of hospital admission | Severe case of COVID-19, immunosuppression | Azithromycin,ceftriaxone, acyclovir, photobiomodulation therapy | Herpetiform ulcers | - |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|------------------------|----------|-----------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| Oral Surg Oral Med Oral Pathol Oral Radiol. 2020 | Thais Bianca Brandao | 71 | F | Yes | Small hemorrhagic ulcerations, focal areas of shallow necrosis | Upper and lower lip, anterior dorsal tongue | At time of hospital admission | Severe case of COVID-19, immunosuppression | Azithromycin, ceftriaxone, acyclovir, photobiomodulation therapy | Herpetiform ulcers | - |
| Oral Surg Oral Med Oral Pathol Oral Radiol. 2020 | Thais Bianca Brandao | 83 | F | Yes | Painful ulcer, focal erythema/petechia and a shallow necrotic area | Right lateral border of the tongue, anterior hard palate | Simultaneous to hospital admission | Severe case of COVID-19, immunosuppression | Piperacillin/tazobactam, ceftriaxone, photobiomodulation therapy | - | - |
| Oral Surg Oral Med Oral Pathol Oral Radiol. 2020 | Thais Bianca Brandao | 72 | M | Yes | Hemorrhagic ulcerations. Painful “aphthous-like” necrotic ulceration | Upper and lower lip vermilion, right lower lip mucosa | Few days after hospital admission | Severe case of COVID-19, immunosuppression | Piperacillin/tazobactam, azithromycin, and ceftriaxone, acyclovir photobiomodulation therapy | Herpetiform ulcers | - |
| Oral Surg Oral Med Oral Pathol Oral Radiol. 2020 | Thais 32 | F | Yes | Multiple | Apex | After 10 days | Mild case | Dypirone | Aphthous | - |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|------------------------|----------|-----------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Surg Oral Med Oral Pathol Oral Radiol. 2020 | Bianca Branda o6° | 6 | | | shallow ulcers and circular with a whitish center and surrounded by an erythematous halo, ranging from 3 to 4 mm and anterior lateral border of tongue | of COVID-19 | | like ulcers |
| Oral Surg Oral Med Oral Pathol Oral Radiol. 2020 | Thais Bianca Branda o6° | 35 | M | Yes | Isolated peritonsillar major aphthous-like ulcer, shallow, circular, covered by a fibrinopurulent membrane and surrounded by an erythematous halo, measuring 0.5 cm | Tonsillar pillar | After 6 days | Mild case of COVID-19 | - | Aphthous like ulcers |
| Oral Surg Oral Med Oral Pathol Oral Radiol. 2020 | Thais Bianca Branda o6° | 29 | M | Yes | Ageusia, Painful ulcer, shallow, 1 cm, with a whitish pseudomembrane | Ventral portion of tongue | After 6 days | Mild case of COVID-19 | Ipratromium bromide, fenoterol hydrochloride | - | Aphthous like ulcers |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------|-----------|-------------|------|------------------------|----------|-----------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Radiol. 2020        | Thais Bianca Branda | 28 M | Yes | surrounding by an erythematous halo | Ageusia, aphthous like ulcers, another ulcer | Upper and lower labial mucosa, right lateral border of tongue | After 8 days | Mild case of COVID-19 | 0.12% non-alcoholic chlorhexidine mouthwash | Aphthous like ulcers |
| Lancet 2020         | Lucio Verdon | 7.5 M=7 F=3 | Yes | - | Lip, oral cavity | - | - | Associated with COVID-19 | - | Kawasaki-like disease |
| Journal of the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society, 2020 | Kathlee Chin Chiotos | 5 F | - | Fissured lip | Lip | - | Potentially driven by a disordered immunological response following SARS-CoV-2 infection | Intravenous immunoglobulin | Kawasaki-like |
| Journal of the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society | Kathlee Chin Chiotos | 9 F | Yes | Fissured lip, strawberry tongue | Lip, tongue | - | Potentially driven by a disordered immunology | Intravenous immunoglobulin, acetyl | Kawasaki-like |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Patient Age (year) | Gender | Covid (+) | Oral Lesions | Site | Appearance Of Symptoms | Etiology | Treatment | Reported Diagnosis | Histopathological Findings |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|-----------|--------------|------|------------------------|----------|-----------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Diseases Society, 2020 | Kathleen Chiotos 30 | 12 | M | No | Fissured lip | Lip | - | Potentially driven by a disordered immunological response following SARS-CoV-2 infection | salicylic acid, corticosteroids | Intravenous immunoglobulin, milrinone | Kawasaki-like |
| American Journal of Emergency Medicine, 2020 | Bahadır Taşlıde re 41 | 51 | F | Yes | Medical history of Melkersson-Rosenthal syndrome. Hyperemic, firm oedema extending towards the jaw, peripheral facial paralysis(right side), right nasolabial | Right lower lip, tongue | Coincident Co-existence between Melkersson-Rosenthal syndrome and COVID-19 and it may be a cause for recurrence of the syndrome. | Hydroxychloroquine, azithromycin, steroid therapy | Melkersson-Rosenthal syndrome | Areas of inflammation involving lymphocytes, plasma cells, mast cells |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Number Of Total Cases Observed | Types of cases                                      | Male | Female | Site of the oral lesion | Any predisposing conditions |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|------|--------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Oral Diseases, 2020 | Milagros Díaz Rodríguez | 3                              | 1. Aphthous like lesions 2. Commisural Cheilitis 3. Candidiasis & Angular Cheilitis | 1    | 2      | 2- tongue 2- lip 1-hard palate/soft palate 2-palate 1-tongue, internal lip mucosa | Diabetis/hypertension(1), hypertension/obesity(1) |
| Oral Diseases, 2020 | Carmen Martín Carreras-Presas | 3                              | 1. Herpetic recurrent stomatitis(2) 2. Erythema multiforme(1) | 2    | 1      | 1 | - |

Table 2. Shows number of total cases observed, types of cases, how many cases occurred in male and female, site, predisposing conditions for each published article with author/journal name in a more concise form.
| Journal Name & Year                  | First Author Name                      | Number Of Total Cases Observed | Types of cases                                                                 | Male | Female | Site of the oral lesion | Any predisposing conditions                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|--------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Journal of Dental Research, 2020    | Juliana Amorim dos Santos⁵             | 1                             | Herpetic recurrent oral lesions associated with Candidiasis, Fibroma, Geographic tongue | 1    | -      | Tongue, lower lip        | Coronary disease, hypertension, polycystic kidney disease, kidney transplant, pulmonary venous thromboembolism |
| Otolaryngology–Head and Neck Surgery, 2020 | Ameen Biadsee²                         | 128                           | Dysgeusia(67), xerostomia(72), sore-throat(34), plaque like changes(9), swelling(10), oral bleeding(6), facial pain(18), masticatory muscle pain(15) | 58   | 70     | Tongue, palate, gingiva  | Hypertension, diabetis mellitus, hypothyroidism, asthma, smoking                                   |
| Oral Diseases, 2020                 | Saygo Tomód⁶                           | 1                             | Oral mucositis                                                                  | -    | 1      | Borders of the tongue    | -                                                                                                    |
| Oral Diseases, 2021                 | Jay Patel¹¹                           | 1                             | Necrotizing gingivitis                                                        | -    | 1      | Gingiva, interdental papillae | -                                                                                                    |
| Dermatology Ther                   | FilizCebeci Kahraman²¹                 | 1                             | Enanthema, Diffuse oropharyngeal erythema, petechia, and pustule formation       | 1    | -      | Oropharynx, hard palate  | -                                                                                                    |
| Journal of Clinical Medicine, 2021  | Gianfranco Favia¹³                      | 123                           | Dysgeusia(79), Geographic tongue(7), Fissured tongue(5), Ulcerative lesion(65), Blisters(19), Hyperplasia of papillae(46), Angina bullosa(11), Candidiasis(28) Ulceronecrotic gingivitis(7), Petechiae(14) | 70   | 53     | Tongue, gingiva, palate  | Probably pre-existing conditions, Sars-CoV-2-related & Treatment-related lesions, Lesions related to poor oral hygiene |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Number Of Total Cases Observed | Types of cases                                                                 | Male | Female | Site of the oral lesion | Any predisposing conditions |
|---------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|--------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| International       | Miguel Dominguez-Santas | 4                             | spontaneous oral hemorrhage(1) Apthous ulcer                                   | 3    | 1      | Buccal mucosa, mucogingival junction, tongue, labial mucosa | -                          |
| Journal of         | Cell Proliferation, | 2020                           |                                                                                |      |        |                         |                            |
|                     | 1                  |                                |                                                                                |      |        |                         |                            |
| International       | Lili Chen³         | 108                            |                                                                                                                                            | 52   | 56     | Oral cavity             | -                          |
| Cell Proliferation, |                   |                                |                                                                                |      |        |                         |                            |
|                     | 2020               |                                |                                                                                |      |        |                         |                            |
| The Journal of      | Steven Halepas³    | 47                             | Swelling, redness, cracking of labial mucosa(23) Red strawberry tongue, white strawberry tongue(5)                                   | 51.1%| 48.9%  | Labial mucosa, tongue   | Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children(MIS-C) |
| the American        |                   |                                |                                                                                |      |        |                         |                            |
| Dental Association, |                   |                                |                                                                                |      |        |                         |                            |
|                     | 2021               |                                |                                                                                |      |        |                         |                            |
| Oral Surg Oral      | Monique Abreu Paul²³ | 1                             | Oral Mucormycosis                                                             | -    | 1      | Hard palate             | Diabetis, wearing a Removable partial denture |
| Oral Pathol Oral    |                   |                                |                                                                                |      |        |                         |                            |
| Radiol 2021 Med     | CiroDantas Soares¹⁰ | 1                             | Painful ulceration, multiple reddish macules of different sizes                | 1    | -      | Buccal mucosa, hard palate, tongue, lips                      | Diabetis mellitus, hypertension |
| Oral Patol Oral Cir |                   |                                |                                                                                |      |        |                         |                            |
| Bucal. 2020 Spec    | Roberto Onner Cruz Tapia¹² | 4                             | Angina-bullosahemorrhagic like lesion(2), Mucosal nonspecific localized vasculitis and thrombosis(1), Vascular disorder(1) | 1    | 3      | Hard palate, palatal mucosa, tongue                           | Hypertension(1)              |
| Care Dentist. 2020  |                   |                                |                                                                                |      |        |                         |                            |
| International       | Jairo             | 1                             | Mild Oral Candidiasis                                                        | -    | 1      | Tongue, lip, gingiva   | -                          |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Number Of Total Cases Observed | Types of cases | Male | Female | Site of the oral lesion | Any predisposing conditions |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|------|-------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Journal of Infectious Diseases, 2020 | Corchuelo⁷ | 9 | Oral stress and aphthous ulcers | 1 | 1 | Hard palate, anterior of the tongue | Diabetis(1), Hyper tension(1) |
| Oral Diseases, 2020 | Reza Ansari¹⁴ | 2 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology, 2020 | Sudip Indu¹⁷ | 1 | Herpes zoster infection | 1 | - | Unilateral, Lower left labial mucosa, left antero-ventral surface of tongue | - |
| Journal of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology, 2020 | Juan Jimenez-Cauhe²² | 6 | Enanthema (macule, petechiae) | 2 | 4 | Hard and soft palate | - |
| JAMA Dermatology, 2020 | Juan Jimenez-Cauhe²¹ | 4 | Erythema multiforme like (Macule, petechiae) | - | 4 | Palate | - |
| Clinical and Experimental Dermatology, 2020 | T. Kammerer¹⁸ | 1 | Secondary herpetic gingivostomatitis | 1 | - | Right side of buccal mucosa | Hypercholesterinæmia and coronary heart disease |
| Hospital Pediatrics, 2020 | Veena G. Jones³³ | 1 | Cracked lip, prominent papilla in tongue (Kawasaki-like) | - | 1 | Lip, tongue | Kawasaki disease |
| Eur. J. Pediat. Dermatol. 2020 | Mazzotta F³⁵ | 1 | Chelitis, glossitis, painful | 1 | - | Lip, tongue | Kawasaki disease |
| S. Karger AG, Basel 2020 | Narges Malih³⁸ | 1 | Erythema, aphthous ulcer, painful, loss of taste | 1 | - | Left tonsil | - |
| Ann Rheum Dis 2020 | Pouletty²⁷ | 16 | Cracked lip (Kawasaki like) | 8 | 8 | Lip | Kawasaki disease, overweight, asthma |
| Pediatric Cardiology, 2020 | Joanne S. Chiu²⁸ | 1 | Cracked lip, erythema (Kawasaki-like) | 1 | - | Lip, oropharynx | Kawasaki disease |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Number Of Total Cases Observed | Types of cases | Male | Female | Site of the oral lesion | Any predisposing conditions |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|------|--------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| International Journal of Dermatology, 2020 | Nessa Aghazadeh\(^{19}\) | 1 | Herpetiform | - | F | Lip, anterior tongue, buccal mucosa | - |
| J EurAcadDermatol Venereol. 2020 | P. Labé\(^{24}\) | 2 | Chelitis, glossitis, stomatitis (Kawasaki-like); Erosion, hemorrhagic crust, chelitis, painful(Erythema multiforme like) | 2 | - | Lip, tongue, oral cavity, gingiva | Kawasaki disease(1) |
| J EurAcadDermatol Venereol. 2020 Oral Surg Oral Med Oral Pathol Oral Radiol. 2020 | Banu Taşkin\(^{39}\) | 1 | Minor aphthous ulcer (Erythema nodosum like Sweet Syndrome) | - | 1 | Hard palate, buccal mucosa | - |
| J EurAcadDermatol Venereol. 2020 Oral Surg Oral Med Oral Pathol Oral Radiol. 2020 | Thaís Bianca Brandao\(^{8}\) | 8 | Herpetiform ulcers(3); Aphthous-like ulcers(4) | 5 | 3 | Lower lip(verbatim)-3, upper lip-2, anterior dorsal tongue-2, lateral border of the tongue-3, anterior hard palate-1, lower lip mucosa-2, Apex of tongue-1, tonsillar pillar-1, Ventral portion of tongue-1, upper labial mucosa-1 | Hypertension, Diabetis mellitus(1); Hypertension, obesity, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease(COPD), Parkinson’s, Pancreatitis(1); Hypertension, obesity, Chronic Renal Failure, Diabetis mellitus(1); Hypertension, COPD(1) |
| Lancet 2020 | Lucio Verdoni\(^{109}\) | 10 | -(Kawasaki-like) | 7 | 3 | Lip, oral cavity | Kawasaki disease |
| Journal Name & Year | First Author Name | Number Of Total Cases Observed | Types of cases | Male | Female | Site of the oral lesion | Any predisposing conditions |
|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|------|--------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Journal of the Pediatric Infectious Diseases Society, 2020 | Kathleen Chiotos | 3 | Fissured lip-3; Strawberry tongue-1, Kawasaki-like | 1 | 2 | Lip- 3, Tongue-1 | Kawasaki disease |
| American Journal of Emergency Medicine, 2020 | Bahadır Taşlıdere | 1 | Orofacial oedema, facial paralysis, fissured tongue (MRS) | - | F | Lower lip, tongue | Melkersson-Rosenthal Syndrome(MRS) |
| J Wound Ostomy Continence Nurs. 2020 | Charleen Singh | 1 | Extensive mucosal damage | 1 | - | Lip, tongue | Diabetis mellitus, hypertension |

Table 3. Shows total cases, type of lesions, number of cases of each lesion from all articles searched

| Total cases | Type of lesions | Number of cases |
|-------------|----------------|-----------------|
| 488 | Oral ulcers | 87 |
| | Chelitis | 3 |
| | Glossitis | 1 |
| | Candidiasis | 31 |
| | Erythema multiforme | 6 |
| | Fibroma | 1 |
| | Geographic tongue | 8 |
| | Dysgeusia | 147 |
| | Xerostomia | 134 |
| | Sore throat | 34 |
| | Plaque-like changes | 9 |
| | Swelling | 45 |
| | Oral bleeding | 6 |
| | Facial pain/masticatory muscle pain | 33 |
| | Submandibular lymph node enlargement | 1 |
| Total cases                      | Type of lesions                                  | Number of cases |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Total cases                     | Oral mucositis                                    | 1               |
|                                  | Necrotizing gingivitis                            | 8               |
|                                  | Enanthema                                         | 41              |
|                                  | Fissured tongue                                   | 5               |
|                                  | Hyperplasia of papilla                            | 46              |
|                                  | Angina-bullosa like lesions                       | 13              |
|                                  | Amblygeustia                                      | 51              |
|                                  | Strawberry tongue                                 | 5               |
|                                  | Cracked lip                                       | 23              |
|                                  | Oral mucormycosis                                 | 1               |
|                                  | Mucosal non-specific localised vasculitis and thrombosis | 2          |
|                                  | Kawasaki-like lesions                             | 33              |
|                                  | Melkersson-Rosenthal Syndrome like lesions        | 1               |
|                                  | Extensive mucosal damage                          | 1               |
The aim of this study is a review of maximum of oral lesion presentation associated with COVID-19 previously described and explained by many authors and a collection and overview of the same for better understanding and knowledge in depth. We have searched recent studies published from previous year and this year (2020,2021) in search engines like PubMed, Google Scholar etc. We have typed the keywords like oral lesions, COVID-19, SARS-CoV-2, oral mucosa, manifestations. (Table1,2,3)

2. COVID-19 AND ALLIED ORAL LESIONS

Angiotensin Converting Enzyme 2 (ACE2) receptor is a membranous protein presented by oral epithelium specially the salivary gland and the tongue [11]. It is found in abundance in oral tissues [12]. The virus SARS-CoV-2 has an invasive ability and special affinity for receptors for ACE2. Naturally the oral epithelium becomes the host cells or the target organ for infection and an easy route for entry for the virus, causing inflammatory response in salivary gland and tongue mucosa epithelium [12,6]. Studies have also indicated that salivary glands carry the most RNA linked to protein than tongue mucosa, buccal mucosa, palate, tonsils for the attack of the virus. ACE2 receptor and an enzyme called TMPRSS (transmembrane protease, serine 2) are included under them. They help the virus in fusing its membrane with cells of the host and thus gains entry [12]. Therefore, saliva is a major reservoir for SARS-CoV-2 infection as per reports [1]. SARS-CoV-2 interaction with ACE2 can also result in dysgeusia by impairment of taste buds [6]. Due to this pathogenesis, the oral signs and symptoms related to this virus may be taken into account and studied further.

2.1 Description of the Commonly Presented Oral Lesions

2.2.1 Dysgeusia

The most important feature among all may be the altered taste or dysgeusia associated with loss of smell that is noticed in patients infected with COVID-19. Thus, they are one of the earliest indicators. The cranial nerves 1,7, 9,10 may be affected by SARS-CoV-2 and also the cells supporting their transmission. Again, ACE2 receptors are present in huge numbers in tongue mucosa which helps the virus to infect and attack the cells because of their affinity for ACE2 receptors [12] through dopamine and serotonin synthesis pathway coregulation [6].

SARS-CoV-2 can bind with sialic acid (essential salivary mucin component) thus altering gustatory sensation. Also, ACE inhibitors and ACE2 blockers used in COVID-19 treatment causes taste disorders by G protein-coupled and sodium channel inactivation. After recovery from COVID-19 and their discontinuation taste sensation becomes normal [6].

2.1.2 Xerostomia

Xerostomia is the 2nd most common characteristic oral sign associated with COVID-19 infection. Due to the presence of ACE2 receptor in salivary glands as stated above, the virus gets entry into the salivary gland’s epithelial cells and the quality and quantity of saliva produced is interrupted. Another cause can be the mouth breathing due to continual use of mask which results in dryness of mouth if not hydrated frequently. Xerostomia can affect oral cavity in caries prevalence and fungal infections due to Candida [12].

2.1.3 Sore throat

Sore throat is also a common finding in many patients with COVID-19 infection. It has been suggested by many authors [2].

2.1.4 Oral ulcers

Oral ulcers are considered to be the most common among all oral lesions characterized in COVID-19 infection. We can divide them into Aphthous-like and Herpetiform-like oral ulcers.

2.1.4.1 Aphthous ulcers

According to many studies, they presented as multiple shallow ulcers and circular with a whitish center and surrounded by an erythematous halo, ranging from 3 to 4 mm, or, (0.5-1)cm may be covered by an fibrinopurulent membrane or with a whitish pseudomembrane. Some present as several painful small ulcers, with irregular margins, in red and non-hemorrhagic background. They may occur in clusters or single [4,13,14].

Increased level of tumour necrosis factor (TNF)-α in COVID-19 patients may result in chemotaxis of neutrophils to oral mucosa and develop these lesions [6]. They can also develop by
cytokine storm due to COVID-19, stress, immunosuppression. Maximum of them present in tongue, others seen in gingiva, palate, buccal mucosa, labial mucosa, mucogingival junction, tonsillar pillar [4,13,14].

2.1.4.2 Herpetiform ulcers

They present as painful multiple small, pinpoint, yellowish or orange ulcers unilaterally with an erythematous halo, some with burning, itching sensation, irregular, shallow, round to oval in shape ulcer(0.5mm×0.5mm, well-circumscribed). Some are covered with mucopurulent membrane, some with hemorrhagic ulcerations with necrosis. They are most prevalent in tongue, labial mucosa followed by buccal mucosa and palate [4,15,3,16,17,18].

Immunosuppression, emotional distress, secondary lesions associated with COVID-19, extended inpatient care, underlying diseases, COVID-19 related cutaneous manifestation/dermatosis may be the causative factor for these lesions [3,4,15,16,17,18].

2.1.4.3 Ulcer and erosion

They appeared as painful lesions, some as multiple reddish macules of different sizes. Location as per studies can be buccal mucosa, hard palate, tongue, lip and in gingiva also [5,8]. They can be seen in moderate cases of COVID-19 in maximum number [8,5].

Early and late ulcerative lesions are due to SARS-COV-2 related lesions and treatment related lesions respectively. Lesions related to poor oral hygiene leads to ulcero-necrotic gingivitis [5]. Thrombotic vasculopathy secondary to COVID-19 may be another cause [8].

3. CANDIDIASIS

Candidiasis is seen in some cases and manifested mainly in tongue, and also in lip, palate, gingiva. Pain and burning symptoms were seen. Lesions presented as white plaque/whitish areas. Red forms mainly located in tongue with median rhomboid glossitis like appearance, while in palate white forms were more frequent, the first type(white forms) present more in moderate form of COVID-19 and second type(red forms) in intubated patients (severe and critically-ill). Pseudomembranous and mild oral candidiasis were noted, in 1 case it was associated with herpetic recurrent oral lesions [3,5,19,9].

Immunosuppression, stress, secondary lesions, COVID-19 treatment related lesions, lack of oral hygiene can be the probable cause [3,5,19,9].

3.1 Gingival Inflammation/Swelling

One of the important signs reported are bleeding and gingival inflammation in COVID-19 infection. Generalized increase in inflammation due to increased cytokine and interleukin level by SARS-CoV-2 virus can be a major cause. Immune imbalance can also be considered vital factor in this disease, resulting in cytokine storm specially by interleukin-6, which worsens in presence of periodontal disease [12].

3.2 Enanthena

Enanthena is mainly reported by 2 authors. Typical presentations were on hard and soft palate and oropharynx. The signs were inability to taste, sore throat, largely erythematous surface, a few petechiae in the midline and numerous pustular enanthema, more prominent on the left side,1-3 mm in diameter. Also in another case macule, petechiae were noticed.

Probable reason described by the authors were infection by SARS-CoV-2 virus in oral cavity due to COVID-19 [20,21].

3.3 Necrotizing Gingivitis

Covid-19 infection is also associated with necrotizing periodontal disease. Signs and symptoms included severe halitosis, with generalized erythematous and edematous gingivae. Necrotic interdental papillae and bleeding gums were noted. Bilateral submandibular lymphadenopathy was associated. They are also seen mostly in severe and critical cases of COVID-19 [5,10].

Bacterial co-infections (especially Prevotella intermedia), poor oral hygiene and COVID-19 was attributed to such oral lesions [5,10].

3.4 Hyperplasia of Papilla

It was always seen in patients with dysgeusia and characterized by red enlargement of papilla on dorsum and sides of tongue. Moderate form of COVID-19 cases showed a high number of hyperplasia of papilla. They may have an association with COVID-19[5].
3.5 Oral Mucormycosis

It was described by one author in the context of COVID-19 and seen in current year i.e., 2021. It was presented by a female patient (50 yrs), having a painful, deep ulcerated lesion located at the center of the hard palate. The lesion measured around 2 cm with exposed bone and was surrounded by an erythematous halo and had lobulated borders and swollen focal areas. Incisional biopsy was done and medications were advised.

Among the reasons, immunosuppression by diabetes, acute inflammatory immune response due to COVID-19 or COVID-19 associated oral lesion were considered [22].

3.6 Erythema Multiforme-Like Lesions

This type of lesions were reported by some authors. They characterized by macule, petechiae, some had pain in tongue, pruritic blisters, bulla, desquamative gingivitis, others had erosion, chelitis, hemorrhagic crust. They were mostly present in tongue, lip, palate or gingiva [15,23,24].

Findings suggested the lesions appeared as a result of underlying disease, emotional distress or COVID-19 associated [15,23,24].

3.7 Geographic and Fissured Tongue

They were found in 2 studies. In 1 study, the lesions were asymptomatic and were pre-existing conditions [5]. In another study, presented as atrophic areas surrounded by elevated yellow-white halo which was associated with fissured tongue. This severe geographic tongue was classified as moderate after recovery from COVID-19. They were thought to be due to secondary lesions as a result of degradation of systemic health or treatments for COVID-19 infection [3].

3.8 Strawberry Tongue and Cracking of Lips

These lesions presented as swelling, redness, cracking of labial mucosa. Red strawberry tongue appeared as hyperplastic papilla against an erythematous dorsal tongue. White strawberry tongue presented as hyperplastic papilla against a white coating of the dorsal tongue [25].

The authors concluded that lesions were due to post-viral inflammatory reaction and these oral changes presented were early indicators of Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C) with COVID-19 infection [25].

3.9 Angina-Bullosa Like Lesions

They generally presented in the hard and soft palate, tongue or buccal mucosa as brown-black single multiple bullae with associated petechiae. They were mainly treatment related lesions (patients on anticoagulant medications) and seen mostly in moderate cases of COVID-19. In another study, these angina-bullosa like lesions presented as non-bleeding, asymptomatic lesions and appeared as purple, erythematous bullae (6-8 mm of soft consistency. These lesions were associated with COVID-19 infection [11, 5].

3.10 Kawasaki-Like Lesions

They appeared as cracked lip, fissured lip, prominent papilla in tongue, strawberry tongue, erythema, chelitis, glossitis, stomatitis, may be painful and also affecting oropharynx, oral cavity affecting the children [7,23,26,27,28,29,30,31].

The authors stated that these oral lesions were due to Kawasaki disease with concurrent COVID-19 infection or may be due to disordered immunological response following infection by SARS-CoV-2 virus. These oral lesions characterized may not be having direct effect by the virus [7,23,26,27,28,29,30,31].

3.11 Melkersson-Rosenthal Syndrome

One case was reported of a 51 yrs old woman having a medical history of Melkersson-Rosenthal Syndrome with a positive report of COVID-19. She presented with unilateral lip swelling, malaise, orofacial oedema, facial paralysis, fissured tongue, affecting her right side of face. The signs were coincident with COVID-19 infection.

There may be coexistence between COVID-19 and Melkersson-Rosenthal Syndrome and that may have caused its recurrence [32].
4. STRESS AS AN IMPORTANT FACTOR IN DEVELOPMENT OF ORAL LESIONS

Due to highly contagious and sudden outbreak of COVID-19 as a pandemic, anxiety, depression and other stress related reactions among people are inevitable [32]. As a result of halt in the daily activities and social interactions because of lockdown for unknown period of time, people develop depressions and may lose confidence in life which affect their mental health [33]. This kind of panic of the public in psychology is called PSYCHOLOGICAL STRESS. Here COVID-19 becomes the stressor of public panic. The uncertainty and lack of knowledge of COVID-19, its fast transmission speed and infectious nature and its outcomes in human lives, SARS-CoV-2 virus is responsible for making public nervous and highly stressful [33]. According to WHO, the current death rate due to COVID-19 worldwide is 36.9 lakhs. Many people have negative thoughts in their minds and some may lose their hopes after watching and reading news channels, newspapers and seeing the death rates or number of infected rates, hospitalization news, shortage of beds and treatment in proper time, and it becomes a continuous hammer to their brain. One author reported that females are more prone than males to develop these anxiety, stress and nervousness and that 40yrs or below aged people faces these problems more than those of above 40yrs [33].

Stress response activates autonomic nervous system, mainly sympathetic, via hypothalamic–pituitary–adrenal (HPA) axis, which secretes corticotropin-releasing factor (CRF) and arginine–vasopressin (AVP). Adrenocorticotropic hormone (ACTH), enkephalins, and endorphins are released as a result of this. Thus, the stress-response function acts by a positive, bidirectional feedback loop. Various other factors released in response to stress are angiotensin II, various cytokines, and lipid mediators of inflammation. They act on different components of HPA axis and intensifies the action [34].

COVID-19 is also seen more in people having comorbidities such as obesity, hypertension, diabetes and cardiovascular disease and periodontitis [35]. Smoking or tobacco consumption in any form for deleting effect of stress imposes an additional risk by contributing to poor oral health status. COVID-19 infection induces oxidative stress, activates unregulated cytokine offering (cytokine storm) and inflammation. The receptor of SARS-CoV-2 is Angiotensin-converting enzyme 2 (ACE2) regulates vascular function by modulating nitric oxide (NO) release and oxidative stress [35].

Psychosomatic reasons with oral diseases are there from long ago and they impose a threat for the development and progression of oral lesions [36]. Various oral manifestations include xerostomia, dysgeusia, aphthous ulcers, herpetiform ulcers, candidiasis, necrotizing periodontitis, erythema multiforme etc. which have a very close relation with stress [34]. A possible mechanism of ACE-2 and reactive oxygen species (ROS) activation by COVID-19 and the repressing of NRF2 (nuclear factor erythroid 2-related factor-2) manifests oral symptoms and Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS) in lungs, inflammations and oxidative stress in multiple organs [35].

Reactive oxygen species (ROS) and free radicals are physiologically produced during cellular metabolism. When their balance is disrupted in favour of ROS, a condition called oxidative stress occurs. Uric acid is the main antioxidant in saliva and has role in managing oxidative stress. Inflammatory infections of oral cavity by bacteria in gingiva is initiated which triggers the activation of host defence systems. Thus, production of ROS is increased to disturb pathogenic microorganisms. ROS does not distinguish between pathogenic bacteria (having antioxidant defences) and host structures and destroys the tissue of the organism that has produced them as a ‘defence weapon'. ROS action is highly increased in patients with periodontal disease having weak antioxidant defence system. Recurrent aphthous stomatitis (RAS) causes include local trauma, systematic, genetic, immunological, microbial factors, use of immunosuppressive drugs etc. Oxidant-antioxidant equilibrium is thus disturbed and increases production of free radicals. There is compromise of immune system by oxidative stress situation. Cell damage occurs after getting trigger from an increase in free radicals. The enzymatic antioxidant defence system is damaged in RAS having active lesion and has an important role in its pathogenesis [37].

People as a general basis must stay away from the media as far as possible, discuss about positive news, can do free hand exercise or jogging, practice meditation or breathing exercises, indulge themselves in any type of
productive works or can have music therapy to keep their mind fresh and stress-free. Vaccination against COVID-19 among all age groups must be encouraged as fast as possible. This also ensures people to fight the pandemic and hoping for better days to come.

5. CONCLUSION

COVID-19 disease started in Wuhan, China, gradually affected all other countries including India and soon it became a global crisis and became a pandemic. The respiratory system is the target of SARS-CoV-2 virus and alongside it also impairs other body organs. It directly or indirectly affects the oral mucosa mainly due to the presence ACE2 receptor, to which the virus attaches and finds its entry.

Dysgeusia, xerostomia, sore throat, oral ulcers including aphthous and herpetiform, candidiasis, swelling of gingiva, enanthema, oral lesions of Kawasaki-like disease are the most common oral lesions manifested. We have also found 1 case of oral mucormycosis related to COVID-19 disease. We cannot fully correlate the etiopathogenesis of such lesions with COVID-19 or justify its exclusiveness. Several other factors which seem to be worth mentioning includes stress, immunosuppression, underlying systemic disorder, co-infections, secondary lesions, opportunistic infections, older age, slight female predilection, poor oral hygiene, severity of COVID-19 infection, vascular compromise, treatment related lesions, hyper inflammatory response secondary to COVID-19. Hence, we can conclude that there are some lesions having direct association with SARS-CoV-2 virus and in some it has a great contributory effect with other etiopathogenesis keeping in mind.

Stress or emotional distress playing a major part in development of oral lesions must not be neglected in the era of COVID-19. So, its high time for all the generations to keep their mind free from any negative thoughts, have healthy food and music therapy, have social contact, meditation and exercising, and discussing positive news.

Oral health management is also necessary and regular follow up and a visit to the dentist can help decrease most of these oral lesion's progress by early detection.

CONSENT

It is not applicable.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

It is not applicable.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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