

HUMAN PAPILOMAVIRUS PREVALENCE IN THE NORMAL ORAL MUCOSA

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The Human Papillomavirus (HPV) has been associated with the most different kinds of cancers. However its prevalence in the oral cavity has not been as well studied as its infection in the uterine cervix yet. The presence of HPV in the normal oral mucosa (latent infection) and its relation to oral cancer have generated conflicting opinions. Among the factors that generate controversy about HPV prevalence in the normal oral mucosa can be stress the large variation in HPV detection rates, from 0% to 100% despite the use of more sensitive methods. The discrepancy observed is mainly attributed to a variation in the sensitivity of the methods employed and epidemiologic factors related to the group of patients examined. 75 samples collected from exfoliative cytology were analyzed for the presence of HPV through PCR-RFLP and conventional light microscopy. All the findings were negative for both methods, probably because of the virus presence association to several local factors. It is concluded that HPV is rarely or it is not present in normal oral mucosa.