INVESTIGATING L-FUCOSE RESIDUES IN ORAL FOETAL HUMAN TISSUES USING LECTIN HISTOCHEMISTRY

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Lectin histochemistry can provide a sensitive detection system for changes in carbohydrate expression occurring in embryogenesis, growth and disease. In this work *Ulex europeus* agglutinin (UEA-I) was used to evaluate the L-fucose profile in human oral foetal tissues (lips and parotid glands) aging between 17th and 28th week-old of development. In the 18th week myoepithelial cells and ductal luminal surface were intensely stained while acinar and ductal cells of parotid gland were not. In the 23th week vascular endothelium and mesenquimatous cells were moderately stained. In its 26th week-old acinar cell were stained but ductal ones did not. In 17th week-old lips the epithelial cells presented a nuclear membrane intense staining and vascular endothelium a weak one. In the 21st week epithelial cords and ducts and mesenquimatous cells presented an intense membrane staining and a moderate cytoplasmic staining. In the 26th week myoepithelial cells and the vascular endothelium presented a moderate and heterogeneous staining pattern while 28th week-old ductal and acinar cells were not stained by UEA-I. Results indicate that L-fucose has a pattern of expression that varies during the development of the lips and parotid glands in human beings.

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