

PRESENCE OF HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS IN THE NORMAL ORAL CAVITY OF A BRAZIL'S NORTHEAST POPULATION

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The prevalence of human papillomavirus (HPV) in the oral cavity has not been as well studied as its infection in the vaginal tract yet. The presence of HPV in the normal oral mucosa (latent infection) and its relation to oral cancer have generated conflicting opinions. A great variation in HPV detected rates has been observed, in healthy individuals, from 0% to 81.1% in studies using different methods, and with a limited number of individuals. 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. The finding of HPV high-risk in presumably normal individuals mucosa implies that these individuals may have a dormant infection that could contribute to the development of oral cancer in the future. Fifty samples collected from exfoliative cytology were analyzed for the presence of HPV through Polymerase Chain Reaction method. The results were compared with those of conventional light microscopy. All the findings were negatives for both methods, probably because of the virus presence association to several factors like environment, immunologic and cultural conditions.

Key words: HPV, PCR, oral cavity, exfoliative cytology