Providing Adapted Care for Patients with Immune-mediated Mucous Membrane Conditions

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ABSTRACT

Background: Immune-mediated diseases frequently manifest in the oral mucosa, which may be the first clinical sign for many patients. Some of these diseases present in ways that are pathognomonic (specific) for the condition; however, others have signs and symptoms that may appear very similar to systemic conditions unrelated to immune-mediated diseases. Thus, differential diagnosis can be difficult. This case study examines a 50-year-old African American female presented with manifestations of disease during the dietary assessment and treatment.

Methods: The patient presented to the IU School of Dentistry Dental Hygiene Clinic for routine periodontal maintenance and examination. The sensitive nature of the patient’s oral mucosa due to Lichen Planus and Mucous Membrane Pemphigoid required employment of alternative methods to routine dental care. Modifications to the patient’s diet and home oral care routines were suggested.

Conclusions: Oral health providers should be conscious of the clinical manifestations of Lichen Planus and Mucous Membrane Pemphigoid, in addition to other oral conditions. Likewise, providers should be adept at altering routine dental care methods to accommodate patients with these and other immune-mediated conditions. If clinical treatment and oral care are administered properly, the patient should experience alleviated symptoms and suffer less discomfort and sensitivity on a day-to-day basis and during dental assessment and treatment.

INTRODUCTION

A 50-year-old African American female presented with a chief concern (CC) of receiving a dental cleaning and examination. The patient was due for periodontal maintenance and a periodic oral examination by a DDA. Although the patient was on a three month recall system, at the time of the initial assessment in the Dental Hygiene Clinic of IUSD, the patient had not received hygiene care for over seven months. Upon review of the patient’s medical history, it was noted that she had been previously diagnosed with Mucous Membrane Pemphigoid and Lichen Planus. Generalized oral sensitivity and oral lesions have plagued the patient in the past, but during initial visits no visible lesions or hypersensitivity were present. The patient later presented with mild xerostomia during the dietary analysis phase of treatment as documented by photos. As described in a 2015 review from the International Journal of Dermatology, Oral Lichen Planus is “an inflammatory chronic disease of the skin and mucous and is one of the most frequent dermatological diseases of the oral cavity.” Lesions are “chronic, potentially pre-malignant, causing frequent morbidity, and rarely remit spontaneously.” Mucous Membrane Pemphigoid is an “autoimmune, chronic, bullous, subcutaneous disease characterized by the formation of painful bullae, predominantly on the mucosa, with minimal skin involvement, and there is a tendency to form scars,” which leads to the other name for the disease, Cicatricial Pemphigoid.

METHODS

A 50-year-old African American female presented with a chief concern (CC) of receiving a dental cleaning and examination. The patient was due for periodontal maintenance and a periodic oral examination by a DDA. Although the patient was on a three month recall system, at the time of the initial assessment in the Dental Hygiene Clinic of IUSD, the patient had not received hygiene care for over seven months. Upon review of the patient’s medical history, it was noted that she had been previously diagnosed with Mucous Membrane Pemphigoid and Lichen Planus. Generalized oral sensitivity and oral lesions have plagued the patient in the past, but during initial visits no visible lesions or hypersensitivity were present. The patient later presented with mild xerostomia during the dietary analysis phase of treatment as documented by photos. As described in a 2015 review from the International Journal of Dermatology, Oral Lichen Planus is “an inflammatory chronic disease of the skin and mucous and is one of the most frequent dermatological diseases of the oral cavity.” Lesions are “chronic, potentially pre-malignant, causing frequent morbidity, and rarely remit spontaneously.” Mucous Membrane Pemphigoid is an “autoimmune, chronic, bullous, subcutaneous disease characterized by the formation of painful bullae, predominantly on the mucosa, with minimal skin involvement, and there is a tendency to form scars,” which leads to the other name for the disease, Cicatricial Pemphigoid.

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