Neoplasms of the oral cavity and oropharynx seen in Lagos general hospitals: A histopathological analysis

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Background: Neoplasms of the oral cavity are associated with high mortality and morbidity and constitute a major public health concern in different parts of the world. The aim of this study is to present the spectrum of oral and oropharyngeal neoplasms seen in Lagos-Nigeria, and analyze the age, sex and histopathological patterns.

Patients and Methods: A retrospective study of 111 cases of oral and oropharyngeal tumours seen in three General Hospitals in Lagos, Nigeria was conducted over a period of 5 years i.e. from January 2003 to December 2007. The ages and gender of the patients, as well as the type of tumours they had were recorded in a predesigned data collection form. The location of the tumour was not specified in many cases and so this was not included. Non-specific diagnoses were also excluded from this study. All the data were analysed using the statistical package for social science (SPSS) Software version 17.

Results: Oral cavity and oropharyngeal tumours constituted 111 (19.9%) of the 581 biopsy specimens obtained in all the centres during the study period. Males accounted for 65 (58.6%) of these cases while females represented 46 (41.4%). The male to female ratio (M: F) was 1.4:1. The mean age of the patients was 41.3 ± 20.5 years (range 2-85 years) with peak incidence seen in the 30-39 and 60-69 year age groups. The most common tumours were salivary gland and malignant epithelial tumours. Pleomorphic adenoma was the commonest salivary gland tumour while squamous cell carcinoma was the only malignant epithelial tumour seen in this study. No case of mucosal melanoma was seen and only one case of metastatic squamous cell carcinoma was seen. Oral tumours were commoner in males than females.

Conclusion: Pleomorphic adenoma was the commonest salivary gland tumour while squamous cell carcinoma was the only malignant epithelial tumour seen in this study

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