

## Angiogenic squamous dysplasia-like phenomenon in oral epithelial precursor lesions

Type:

Article

Abstract:

**Statement of the problem:** Dysplasia, the morphological yardstick of epithelial precursor lesions, is the collective term for a variety of architectural and cytological changes within the altered oral epithelium. Angiogenic squamous dysplasia (ASD), a distinct morphological characteristic in pre-invasive bronchial lesions, describes the presence of capillary tufts that are closely juxtaposed to and projecting into the dysplastic bronchial epithelium. **Objective:** To determine whether ASD-like phenomenon occurs in oral epithelial precursor lesions, and to speculate on its relevance. **Methods:** Twenty cases each of mild, moderate and severe oral dysplasia (inclusive of carcinoma-in-situ), and 10 normal oral mucosa (normal controls) were serial sectioned for H and E staining, and for microvessel density (MVD) scoring with CD31, CD34 and CD105. Microcapillary pattern images were digitally captured for 3-D reconstruction. **Results:** Oral ASD foci consisting of CD31- and CD34-positive capillary loops abutting onto the overlying dysplastic oral epithelium (and causing it to assume an irregular or papillary surface configuration) were identified in moderate (3/20; 15%) and severe dysplasia (13/20; 65%), but not in normal oral mucosa and mild dysplasia. MVD score demonstrated increasing vascularity as epithelium progressed from normal to severe dysplasia ( $p < 0.05$ ). CD105 demonstrated increase neo-vascularization in all dysplasia grades ( $p < 0.05$ ). **Conclusions:** These preliminary Findings taken together suggest that: 1. ASD-like phenomenon may be an important intermediary biomarker in oral precursor lesions; and 2. architectural alterations of the entire disturbed mucosa may be a more useful pre-malignancy index.

Author	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Siar, C. H.</li> <li>• Oo, V. P. A.</li> <li>• Nagatsuka, H.</li> <li>• Nakano, K.</li> <li>• Ng, K. H.</li> <li>• Kawakami, T.</li> </ul>
Source	European Journal of Medical Research
ISSN	0949-2321
DOI	-
Volume (Issue)	14(7)
Page	315-319
Year	2009

Keyword:

Oral precursor lesions,angiogenic squamous dysplasia,immunohistochemistry  
CD31, CD34,CD105,lung-cancer,tumor progression,malignant-transformation  
Possible,relevance,high-risk,tissues

Please Cite As:

SIAR, C. H., OO, V. P. A., NAGATSUKA, H., NAKANO, K., NG, K. H. & KAWAKAMI, T.  
2009. **Angiogenic squamous dysplasia-like phenomenon in oral epithelial  
precursor lesions.***European Journal of Medical Research*, 14, 315-319.

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