

A Case of Long Lasting Atrophic Glossitis Due to Autoimmune Atrophic Gastritis Diagnosed by an Otorhinolaryngologist

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Autoimmune gastritis is caused by a pathologic CD4 T cell-mediated autoimmune response directed against H/K -ATPase. Gradually progressive gastric lesions lead to chronic gastritis which is a precursor of intestinal metaplasia leading to gastric cancer, the second leading cause of cancer death worldwide. Silent initially, megaloblastic pernicious anaemia arising from vitamin B12 deficiency presents as atrophic glossitis, which may be the first and only clinical symptom. In everyday practice, tongue diseases are often misdiagnosed. A holistic approach, detailed history and examination may reveal underlying diseases which are the main cause of the symptoms, presenting a significant challenge for the otorhinolaryngologist. We present the case of a 53-year-old woman referred to an otorhinolaryngologist by her family medicine practitioner due to mouth burning syndrome and nausea lasting for ten years. A comprehensive diagnostic approach emphasized the importance of accurate diagnosis and prompt management of specific underlying diagnoses in everyday otorhinolaryngologic practice.

Keywords: autoimmune gastritis, atrophic glossitis, megaloblastic anaemia, holistic approach