

Oral Premalignancy

Precancerous Lesions

- Leukoplakia
- Proliferative verrucous leukoplakia (PVL)
- Erythroleukoplakia
- Erythroplakia
- Actinic keratosis
- Lichen planus ?
- Oral submucous fibrosis

Leukoplakia

A white patch or plaque that cannot be characterized clinically or pathologically as any other disease. (W.H.O)

As a term it does not define precisely a lesion but it *excludes* several entities.



Leukoplakia is a premalignant lesion

1. A large number of carcinomas has been associated with leukoplakic changes.
2. In prospective studies, occurrence of malignant transformation in oral leukoplakias has exceeded the number of oral cancers expected in the general population.



Epithelial Dysplasia and Leukoplakia

- Occurrence and time of dysplastic changes is uncertain.
- An erythematous component and discomfort should raise suspicion.
- Dysplasia increases the risk for SCCa and surgical excision is required. This precludes prospective follow-up studies.

Etiology of Leukoplakia

- Tobacco
- Alcohol
- Sanguinaria
- Ultraviolet radiation
- Infections
- Trauma

Leukoplakia and Tobacco

- Age range and tobacco habits of patients with leukoplakia are similar to those of patients with squamous cell carcinoma.
- Smokeless tobacco associated leukoplakic changes almost always reverse when habit is stopped.

Leukoplakia and Tobacco

- Relationship is not always clear.
 - Abstinence may not lead to remission
 - Some patients never smoked
- Non-smokers with leukoplakia are at higher risk for squamous cell carcinoma than smokers!

Sanguinaria-associated keratosis

- Herbal extract
- Maxillary alveolar or vestibular mucosa predominantly
- Recent studies have indicated carcinogenic effect on cells.



Leukoplakia

Includes
Erythroleukoplakia
PVL

Excludes
Lichen planus
Frictional keratosis
Tobacco pouch keratosis
Nicotine stomatitis
Linea alba
Leukoedema
Actinic cheilitis
Hypertrophic candidiasis
Hairy leukoplakia
White sponge nevus
Squamous cell carcinoma
etc



Proliferative Verrucous Leukoplakia

- Multisided involvement
- High risk for malignant transformation
- Variations in severity within the same patient
- Women > men
- < 1/3 smokers



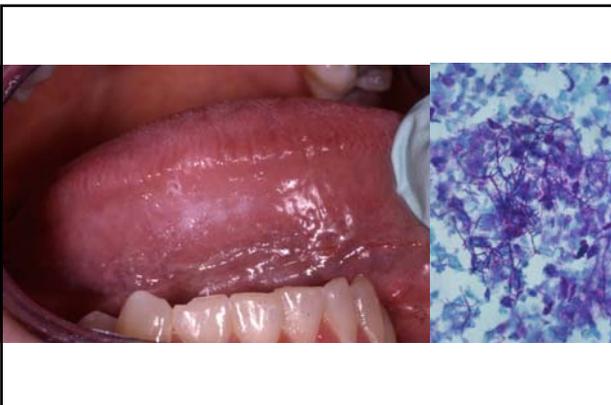
Differential Diagnosis



Malignant Potential of Lichen Planus

- Lichenoid dysplasia
- Chronic cases of lichen planus
 - Erosive
 - Long-standing
 - <3.0%







Clinical Variations of Leukoplakia

- Homogeneous
- Thin/thick
- Granular
- Speckled
- Verruciform
- Proliferative verrucous





Erythroplakia

- A red patch that cannot be clinically or pathologically diagnosed as any other condition
- Less common than leukoplakia
- Represents severe dysplasia or carcinoma at the time of biopsy

