

(CASE REPORT)



Clinical image: A particular lingual hematoma in an 8 year – old male patient

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Abstract

We present a case of an 8-year-old boy with an atypical hematoma on the lateral side of the tongue. The lesion occurred due to a trauma that happened while he was playing at school. The child did not remember to tell anything to teachers or parents until the hematoma and together with it the pain appeared. Due to the extension of the lesion the parents were really worried about, so they brought to us in urgency the child in order to visit him. After a long conversation with both parents and child, we were able to understand the traumatic nature of the lesion, and to rule out more severe diseases. We proposed LASER biostimulation and LASER photocoagulation to reduce the inflammation state of the lingual tissue and so the pain.

Keywords: Lingual hematoma; Traumatic lingual lesions; Pediatric oral lesions; Pediatric lingual hematoma; Pediatric traumatic lesions

1. Introduction

Hematomas are rare entities in the oral cavity, but when it comes to talk about the tongue they are not so unusual to find. Their etiology is spontaneous, most of all linked to anticoagulant therapy in elder people, or traumatic, principally due to accidents and abuses, especially in children (1). In this second case, due to the kindness the lesion and the ease to make diagnosis after a good anamnesis, hematomas can be totally considered part of the big family of the traumatic oral lesions. Difficulties may show when the patient does not report a history of trauma and so it comes to have a differential diagnosis. Differential diagnosis is the most important factor which provides a correct identification of the lesion and of its nature. Here we present a case of a pediatric patient with an unusual hematoma on the lateral side of the tongue.

2. Case Presentation

An 8 year-old boy with negative anamnesis came to our attention with a marked and extremely painful hematoma on the lateral left portion of the tongue at the posterior molars level. At the clinical extraoral examination no abnormalities were observed; at the clinical intraoral examination we appreciated instead the presence of a flat, painful and swollen lesion, purplish in color and oval in shape. Its dimension was about 1 cm in diameter. Dental elements presented no ridges or fractures that could explain the hematoma. The kid's parents were too worried because even them and even the little boy could not explain the appearance of the lesion. So, in order to understand how this could be established, we started to ask the little patient what he did during the past days. After few questions, the boy remembered that, during a football match played with his little friends at school the day before, he closed immediately and strongly his mouth in order to avoid that the ball coming to his face could traumatize his teeth. By doing it, he pinched his tongue between his molars. He did not refer anything to teachers or parents about the trauma, and he started complaining when the hematoma occurred and began to hurt. Once attested how the lesion arose and that it was benign, we suggested the parents a cycle of a LASER biostimulation and LASER photocoagulation in order to reduce the pain and

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to help absorbing the hematoma; unfortunately, the parents did not accept our suggestion, so we used the “wait and see” approach. At one week control the hematoma was regressing and 10 days later it was totally absorbed.



Figure 1 Left margin of the tongue: note the presence of the flat, purplish and swollen lesion

Oral traumatic lesions are one of the most frequent oral disease in children (2). In an epidemiological study on oral injuries in childhood, authors reported that about the 31.1% of the participants have had oral trauma, mostly because of falls (64%), followed by sporting activities (23.2%) (3). However, in the international scientific literature, the documented cases of lingual hematoma mainly concern adults. Sometimes the lingual hematoma in childhood can be linked to an iatrogenic trauma, such as following a frenectomy (4).

3. Conclusion

Even if hematomas are benign lesions, it is very important, especially in pediatric patient, to prevent them. As shown in this case, sport - related traumas can occur when the children are playing at school or at gym and they initially could not be able to recognize the cause of the lesion. This aspect remarks the importance of an accurate anamnesis and the interview not only with the parents, but also with the little patient, in order to rebuild his clinical history. Even more, pediatric dentists must act on prevention, underlining the value of using dental appliances such as soft bites to avert these types of traumas. Furthermore, this case report shows brilliantly the significance of differential diagnosis, which is crucial in order to rule out more severe entities and to avoid to the little patient invasive maneuvers such as biopsies.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

Authors declare no conflict of interest.

Statement of informed consent

The informed consent for the visit and the acquisition of the photographic documentation was obtained from the parents of the patient involved.

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