

A Case of Amelanotic Malignant Melanoma of the Maxillary Gingiva with a Clinical Characteristic of Epulis

Ichiro KAWAHARA¹, Tomohiro HAMADA¹, Hideki KON¹
Satoshi TAKADA¹, Takashi OHNO¹, Tsutomu KOITABASHI²
Jiro NAKAE³, Yuko SAKURAI⁴ and Hiroshi ITO⁴

Malignant melanomas typically occur in the skin and rarely arise in the oral cavity. Amelanotic malignant melanomas, which lack melanin pigment, are less frequent in the oral cavity. We report a case of amelanotic malignant melanoma of the maxillary gingiva with a clinical characteristic of epulis.

A 60-year-old woman was referred to our hospital because of a painless, nonpigmented mass arising in the maxilla. The clinical diagnosis was a benign tumor (epulis). We performed tumor excision under local anesthesia. There were no adhesions of the surrounding tissue. Histopathologically, no melanotic tumor cells were observed in H-E stained sections, but a few tumor cells with melanin pigments were observed in Fontana-Masson stained sections. Immunohistochemically, almost all tumor cells are highly reactive to S-100 protein and anti-HMB-45. Thus the histopathologic diagnosis was amelanotic malignant melanoma. Maxillary partial excision with radical neck dissection was performed, and chemotherapy was performed after operation. The patient's postoperative course has been good with no evidence of recurrence and metastasis.

Key words : amelanotic malignant melanoma, maxilla, immunohistochemistry, epulis

Division of Oral Surgery, Department of Oral Surgery, Ohu University School of Dentistry¹

Department of Dentistry and Oral Surgery, Jusendo General Hospital²

Department of Dentistry, Minamifuruya Hospital³

Division of Oral Pathology, Department of Oral Medical Sciences, Ohu University School of Dentistry⁴