

A PRILIMINARY INVESTIGATION OF DENTO-ALVEOLAR ABSCESSSES IN SRI LANKA

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Dento-alveolar abscesses occur as sequelae of dental caries and periodontal diasese. No study of any aspect of dento-alveolar absesses have been made in Sri Lanka.

Fifty out-patients (34 males & 16 females) presenting with swellings due to dento-alveolar abscess at the Dental School, Peradeniya and General Hospital, Kandy, were studied both clinically and Microbiologically. Samples of pus obtained by aseptic technique were inoculated on blood agar plates and incubated aerobically and anaerobically. Identity of the organisms was established using conventional methods and antibiotic sensitivity testing carried out on 17 samples. Majority of the abscesses (56%) occurred in the age group 10-30 yrs. Caries was responsible for 88% of all abscesses. The mandibular first molar was the commonest tooth (24%) associated with abscess formation, whilst its maxillary counterpart accounted for 16%. Intra-oral abscesses without marked facial swelling were seen in 44% of patients. 22% had both intra and extra-oral swellings.

Pus from 11 patients yielded no growth. Among the other 39 patients 34 yielded pure cultures and 5 yielded mixed cultures of Gram +ve streptococci. 25 of those strains were aerobes and 14 anaerobes. All organisms tested were sensitive to penicillin, streptomycin and erythromycin. All anaerobes were resistant to sulphonamides and 75% were resistant to co-trimoxazole. A noteworthy finding was that 30% of all strains were resistant to tetracycline.