

/ A STUDY OF 832 CASES OF CLEFT LIP AND PALATE

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Approximately one in a thousand are born with the disabling and deforming condition of the cleft lip and palate. The complexity of the clinical problem, the aetiology and the epidemiology of these defects demands intensive and extensive investigation, but very few studies have been undertaken in this country.

Hospital records of 832 patients treated at the Oral Surgery Unit, Dental School, Peradeniya and General Hospital, Kandy, from March 1972 to April 1982, were scrutinized to determine the sex, type and site of the defect, associated anomalies, and age at which each component of the treatment was carried out. Parents were interviewed regarding familial disposition, and other possible aetiological factors, and socio-economic status. Speech was assessed in cleft palate patients to detect nasal escape.

It was revealed that 47% had both cleft lip and palate, 27% had cleft lip only and 26% had cleft palate only. 55% of patients were males. Regarding familial disposition only 19% had a positive family history. Cleft palate patients who had their palate repairs after two years of age had higher rate of nasal escape in speech than those who had their repairs before two years. The defect was found to be more severe in type and extent in patients with a positive family history.

Reference

1. Drillien, C. M., Ingram, T. T. S., Wilkinson, E. M. The Causes and natural history of cleft lip and palate. Edinburgh, Livingston, 1966.