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Langerhans cells in oral mucosa from patients with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome

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Oral manifestations are common in patients with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). The objective of this study is to compare the number of Langerhans cells and intensity of anti-CD1a expression in the mucous membranes of the oral cavities of patients with AIDS and HIV-negative individuals. Sixteen autopsied adults were investigated, including 11 with AIDS, and 5 HIV negative. We identified Langerhans cells in three oral regions using an anti-CD1a antibody and quantified them in cells/mm². We applied normality tests and Man-Whitney. The numbers of Langerhans cells in the AIDS patient group were less than in the control group, but didn't differ significantly between the two groups. The intensity of anti-CD1a expression was lower in patients with AIDS. Of the three areas, the greater intensity of CD1a cells were found in the masticatory mucosa. Reduction of Langerhans cells in AIDS was previously described in the oral mucosa. However, this is the first report, to our knowledge, to evaluate three different oral mucosal membranes within the same subjects. Our study suggests that AIDS influences the amount of Langerhans cells and the intensity of expression of anti-CD1a in all areas of the oral mucosa.

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