

Squamous cell carcinoma arising in a dentigerous cyst lining

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Abstract

A 33 year old presented with a cystic lesion of the maxilla which, on clinical and radiological grounds, was thought to be a dentigerous cyst associated with an un-erupted right maxillary third molar. The lesion was treated by enucleation and primary closure. Histopathological examination revealed a Squamous Cell Carcinoma (SCC) arising in continuity with a benign epithelial cystic lining. The patient declined further surgery but continue to attend follow-up clinics. No occurrence has been noted one year after surgery. SCC arising from an odontogenic cyst is a distinct but relatively uncommon lesion. Because of its uncharacteristic presentation this lesion is rarely diagnosed preoperatively. It is on histopathological examination that the diagnosis is often made. A valid diagnosis of a true carcinoma arising in a cyst requires demonstration of an area of microscopic transition from the benign epithelial cystic lining to the invasive SCC. This report describes a histopathological proven case of SCC arising in a maxillary dentigerous cyst.