A rare anomaly: An accessory tongue

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We present a case of a young girl, 18 years of age, with a rare congenital anomaly of her tongue: an accessory tongue [Figures 1, 2]. The anomaly was evident at birth. It didn’t bother her much except for its unsightly appearance and difficulty in speaking clearly.

Examination revealed a 6 cm x 2.5 cm muscular lesion arising from the dorsal surface of the posterior half of the anterior 2/3rd of the tongue. It was quite similar in gross appearance to the normal tongue underneath it. It moved freely with the tongue although no separate active movement of this accessory tongue was possible.

There was no other associated congenital anomaly like oro-maxillary and limb disorders. Fine needle aspiration cytology had been attempted outside our institute and it revealed fibro-fatty tissue. The accessory tongue was excised under general anesthesia and the defect repaired with vicryl stitches. Recovery was fast and she was discharged the next morning. Histopathology showed muscle tissue akin to normal tongue musculature.

Malformations of the tongue are rare.[1] A pubmed search revealed no such report from English literature. However, there are 3 case reports on accessory tongue in other languages.[2-4] The tongue develops from the first three or four branchial arches when the embryo is about 4 weeks old. Errors in development lead to variety of malformations. The common anomalies include aglossia, microglossia, macroglossia, hemi-glossia and bifid tongue. These are often associated with syndromes like Moebius, Down’s, Hunter’s and hypoglossia-hypodactyly syndrome.[5]

Fortunately, no other anomaly was present in our patient and she was thus cured by a simple surgical procedure.

REFERENCES

Tewari M, et al.: Accessory Tongue


Announcement

The Cancer Aid & Research Foundation has published patient information leaflets on cancer and its various types such as Larynx (Voice Box) cancer, Salivary Gland Cancer, Head & Neck Cancer, Oral (Mouth) Cancer, Thyroid Cancer in English, Hindi and Urdu for free distribution. These leaflets can be avail for free distribution by contacting below:

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