

# A 5-Year Survey of Oral Biopsies in an Oral Surgical Unit in Singapore: 1993-1997

A B G Tay, \**FAMS, MDS, FDSRCSEd*

## Abstract

*A survey of oral biopsies performed in an oral surgical centre in Singapore from 1993 to 1997 was carried out to determine the relative frequency of oral pathologies encountered. A total of 2057 reports were reviewed, of which 1986 separate diagnoses were counted. The great majority of patients were Asian. The 20 most common diagnoses were: fibrous epulis (10.3%), periapical granuloma (8.8%), mucocele (8.6%), radicular cyst (7.6%), lichen planus (5.7%), mucosal inflammation (3.6%), squamous cell carcinoma (3.5%), granulation tissue (3.3%), fibrous hyperplasia (3.1%), keratosis (3.1%), pyogenic granuloma (2.6%), keratocyst (2.4%), osteomyelitis (2.3%), dentigerous cyst (2.3%), dental follicle (1.9%), non-specific ulcer (1.8%), ameloblastoma (1.8%), papilloma (1.5%), odontoma (1.5%) and residual cyst (1.3%). Oral malignancies accounted for 5.2% of all diagnoses, with squamous cell carcinoma (67.0% of malignancies) as the most common malignancy. Odontogenic cysts made up 14.9% of all specimens, with radicular cysts (50.7% of odontogenic cysts) being most common. Non-odontogenic cysts comprised 0.5% of all biopsies. Odontogenic tumours accounted for 5.0% of all diagnoses, with ameloblastoma as the most common tumour (35.0%). Similar surveys in the literature were reviewed. The relative frequency of some conditions appear to be higher than in other studies, including squamous cell carcinoma, odontogenic keratocysts and ameloblastomas.*

*Ann Acad Med Singapore 1999; 28:665-71*

**Key words:** *Odontogenic cysts, Odontogenic tumours, Oral malignancies, Oral pathology, Relative frequency*

---

\* Senior Registrar

Department of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery  
National Dental Centre

Address for Reprints: Dr Andrew B G Tay, Department of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery, National Dental Centre, 5, Second Hospital Avenue, Singapore 168938.