

Acute Noma in Adults: How Immunocompromised Should They Be?

*SULEIMAN IK, **AHMAD MM,
*OLASOJI HO, **SANDA AK

*Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, University of Maiduguri/ University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital, Maiduguri

**Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital, Maiduguri

Correspondence

*Dr. Ibrahim Kayode Suleiman
Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
University of Maiduguri/ University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital
Maiduguri, Borno State
Email: kaysuleiman@yahoo.com*

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INTRODUCTION

Noma is a disease of poverty associated with malnutrition; reduce immunity and poor personal and environmental hygiene. It typically occurs in children less than 12 years of age and seldom in immunocompromised adults, usually HIV associated (Baratti-Mayer et al., 2003). The occurrence of cancrum oris in an immunocompetent adult is extremely rare. We report a series of acute Noma in immunocompetent adults seen over the last three years at the University of Maiduguri Teaching hospital.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Retrospective review of cases of adult patients with acute Noma diagnosed between 2020 and 2022 were analyzed for age, sex, oral hygiene status, HIV/AIDS, albumin and total protein, fasting blood sugar, hemoglobin concentration, and renal function.

RESULTS

There were three cases of acute Noma seen in the adult during this period, 66.7% of which were females. The age ranged from 37 – 70 years (median 55yrs). All patients had poor oral hygiene and are HIV seronegative. All the measured haematological and biochemical parameters were within normal limits, except creatinine was marginally high in one of the patients. However, no features of renal parenchyma disease were evident on the ultrasound scan. The body mass indices are within normal range. All the defects were WHO type 1

CONCLUSION

Noma is well-documented in immunocompromised adults and rarely occurs in immunocompetent, well-nourished adults. The series showed a possible gap in the predisposing factors to Noma. Acute malnutrition and deficiency of micronutrients rather than chronic malnutrition may be an important

predisposing factor in the aetiology and progress of Noma disease.

REFERENCES

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