

Juxtaoral organ of Chievitz: A histopathological masquerade

A 46-year-old female diagnosed with squamous cell carcinoma (SCC) of right buccal mucosa [Figure 1] underwent wide surgical excision of the tumor, and histopathological clearance of resection margins was requested for further management. Tissue harvested from posterior resection margin [arrow, Figure 1] histologically revealed well circumscribed epithelial sprouts present within the loose connective tissue stroma rich in nerves [Figure 2]. These were parenchymal rests of nonkeratinized squamous cells delineated by a basement membrane with few cells showing paler cytoplasm and clear cell-like features [inset, Figure 2]. Based on the anatomic location and the histological features, these structures were recognized as juxtaoral organ of Chievitz (JOOC), and the margin was cleared from tumor invasion. JOOC is a normal permanent anatomical structure located within the soft tissue overlying the angle of the mandible in the buccotemporal space. JOOC is known to mimic various pathologies such as a perineural invasion by SCC, adenoid cystic, mucoepidermoid, and thyroid carcinomas.^[1]

Awareness and knowledge about JOOC and similar physiological structures are indispensable among surgical pathologists to avoid misdiagnosis and unnecessary extensive surgical procedures.

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Figure 1: Ulceroproliferative lesion in the right buccal mucosa extending from corner of the mouth to the retromolar region (arrow showing, area of posterior resection margin of the tumor)

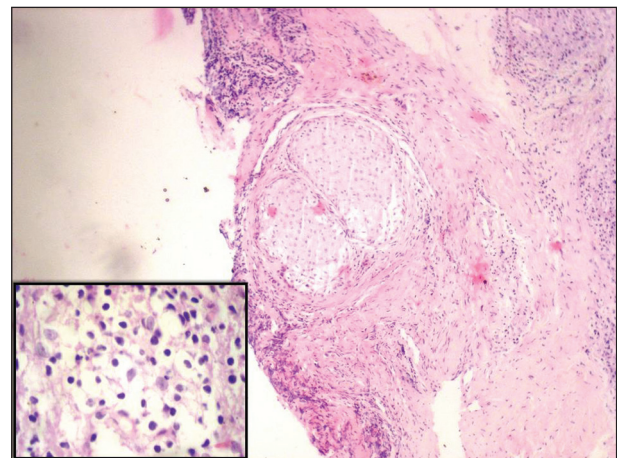


Figure 2: Well circumscribed epithelial sprouts present within the loose connective tissue stroma representative of juxtaoral organs of Chievitz (H and E, original magnification $\times 100$). Inset: Cells showing paler cytoplasm and clear cell like features (H and E, original magnification $\times 1000$)

REFERENCE

1. Pantanowitz L, Balogh K. Significance of the Juxtaoral organ (of Chievitz). *Head Neck* 2003;25:400-5.

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