

# PERIODONTAL HEALTH IN OKLAHOMA

Volume 3, Issue 2

Summer 2011



## Robin's Tip

When in doubt, check it out. Don't be afraid to ask for a second opinion if a lesion looks suspicious. Many patient's appear with oral lesions often caused by some sort of trauma like hot or crunchy foods and aggressive oral hygiene. It is best to be certain, ask the patient to come back in two weeks. If it is still there, refer to a specialist for further evaluation.

## Contact Us:

9112 N May  
Oklahoma City, OK 73120  
(405) 947-0486  
(405) 942-4392 FAX

[www.OkPerioImplant.com](http://www.OkPerioImplant.com)

## Editor:

Dawn Wilson, RDH, BA  
[dawn@okperioimplant.com](mailto:dawn@okperioimplant.com)

## Detecting Suspicious Mouth Lesions

Determining whether a soft tissue abnormality in the mouth is pre-cancerous can be tricky. More than likely they are benign in nature, but when should action be taken and which lesions deserve to watch and wait?

A recent patient was referred for a periodontal evaluation concerning the recession and irritated tissues on the lower right canine and premolar area. As noted in the photo, there was significant accumulation of plaque and debris. The gingival

tissue was highly inflamed with very easy bleeding upon light provocation. There is significant recession as well as an inadequate zone of attached and keratinized gingival tissue. These are mutually exclusive findings.

The patient reports very little pain in the area except when brushing. Notice the surrounding tissue has a whitish appearance as well as multi-colored zones.

Note that it does not appear anywhere else in the mouth. Normally, if there is a periodontal concern it is generalized, appearing in more than one location. The patient's medical history included 40+ years of tobacco use, smoking and smokeless tobacco, of which he quit in 2007. Because of these findings, a soft tissue excisional biopsy was done at the consultation appointment.

The surgical pathology report was positive for squamous cell carcinoma. The patient was then referred to a head and neck cancer specialist for further evaluation and treatment. Future treatment will include excision of the surrounding tissues as well as the possibility of losing of up to 4 teeth in the area. This patient's type of cancer is very treatable assuming there is no lymph node involvement, which there doesn't appear to be at this time.

As a rule of thumb, any sore, discoloration, prominent tissue, irritation, hoarseness, **which does not resolve within a two week period on its own, with or without treatment**, should be considered suspicious and worthy of further examination or referral.

Prevention is key! Any suspicious lesion should be biopsied and histologically evaluated, better to be safe than sorry.



Localized lesion near tooth #27, white patches, and multi-colored zones.

Diagnosis: Squamous Cell Carcinoma



**Fibromas:** Irritation fibromas are the most common of oral tumorlike growths. It may occur at any oral site but is most often on the buccal mucosa along the plane of occlusion. The growth tends to be round,

asymptomatic, smooth-surfaced and firm, see Fig. 1. A reactive fibroma is often caused by an irritant, see Fig. 2. This fibroma was removed, notice the calculus present on the teeth in Fig. 3, which was not visible in Fig. 2. The tissue was submitted to a pathologist for further evaluation and a thorough prophylaxis was performed.



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Oklahoma Center for Implants and Periodontics  
9112 North May Avenue  
Oklahoma City, OK 73120  
405.947.0486  
[www.okperioimplant.com](http://www.okperioimplant.com)

*Our mission is to give the most accurate information available about Dental Health. Unfortunately, there is a lot of misinformation out there and we would like to set the record straight. We are Committed to improving the foundation of a patient's smile.*

*We would like to answer your questions and perhaps share some of our observations we see on a daily basis through this newsletter and online. It doesn't have to be all business, hopefully we can have some fun too.*

Check us out:  
[www.okperioimplant.com](http://www.okperioimplant.com)



Robin Henderson, DMD, MS  
Chris Poore, DDS, MS

*Committed to improving the foundation  
of a patient's smile.*

## *From the Editor...Spring Fling Hygiene Expo*

Four years ago, Dr. Robin Henderson started the first Spring Fling Hygiene Expo for his "favorite people", dental hygienists. No one could have predicted that this annual one day continuing education event would become such a hit among Oklahoma dental hygienists. Over 400 registered this year making it our biggest meeting to date.

The conference intended for "Hygienists Only" is an excellent opportunity to receive quality continuing education for a reasonable price and allows a unique networking opportunity with colleagues. In addition, the event appeals to those who like to have fun while learning.

Dental and non-dental related vendors were available as well as the ever popular onsite chair massage therapists. Shopping and a little pamper time appealed to the audience.

Of course, door prizes are a must and were a huge hit! Hygienists chased staffers down to make sure they received a door prize ticket, especially when they found out the grand prize given away at the end of the day was an iPad. The other 399 attendees are a little envious of Madeline Dooley from Alva who walked away with the coveted prize.

When asked about the best part of the event, many described it as an entertaining and educational event that was well organized and informative. They enjoyed catching up with friends but most importantly it was focused on dental hygienists.

Next year's Spring Fling is tentatively set for March 30, 2012. We hope to see you there!

