



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

## Epidemiological survey of mucus extravasation phenomenon at an oral pathology referral center during a 43 year period<sup>☆</sup>



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### KEYWORDS

Mucocele;  
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### Abstract

**Introduction:** Mucoceles are common benign pseudocystic lesions of the oral cavity; their main etiological factors are trauma and ductal obstruction. Two histological patterns are found: mucus retention phenomenon (MRP) and mucus extravasation phenomenon (MEP). Mucus extravasation phenomenon is the more common histological subtype and it mainly affects the lower lip. The knowledge of its main clinical features and management is important to assist health professionals in clinical practice.

**Objective:** This study aimed to determine the relative frequency and distribution of oral mucoceles in an oral pathology reference center.

**Methods:** Cross-sectional historical study that analyzed all cases pathologically diagnosed as mucus extravasation phenomenon by the department of anatomic pathology of an oral pathology referral center from June of 1970 to May of 2014, considering the clinical characteristics of the lesion and those relating to the patient. SPSS v. 20.0 software for Windows was used for descriptive analysis.

**Results:** During 43 years, 719 cases of mucus extravasation phenomenon (54.7% men and 45.3% women) were registered, with the lower lip as the most commonly affected site ( $n = 484$ ; 67.3%).

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The average age of patients was 20.8 years (SD  $\pm$  14.4) with a peak occurrence in the second decade of life. Most professionals had oral mucocele/ranula ( $n = 606$ ; 84.3%) as the initial clinical impression.

**Conclusion:** Mucus extravasation phenomenon is a lesion that primarily affects young patients, affecting mainly the lower lip, and is commonly found in oral diagnostic services.

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## PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Mucocele;  
Ranula;  
Glândulas salivares  
menores

## Levantamento epidemiológico de fenômeno de extravasamento de muco de um centro de referência em patologia oral por um período de 43 anos

### Resumo

**Introdução:** Mucoceles são lesões pseudocísticas benignas comuns da cavidade oral, que possuem como principais fatores etiológicos trauma ou obstrução ductal. Dois padrões histopatológicos são encontrados: fenômeno de retenção de muco (FRM) e fenômeno de extravasamento de muco (FEM). O FEM é o subtipo histológico mais comum e tem como principal local de acometimento o lábio inferior. O conhecimento acerca de suas principais características clínicas e formas de tratamento se faz importante para auxiliar profissionais da saúde na prática clínica.

**Objetivo:** Este trabalho objetivou determinar a frequência relativa e a distribuição das mucoceles orais em um centro de referência em patologia oral.

**Método:** Estudo transversal de caráter histórico, no qual foram analisados os casos diagnosticados histopatologicamente como FEM pelo serviço de anatomia patológica de um centro de referência em patologia oral, no período de junho de 1970 a maio de 2014, considerando-se variáveis clínicas da lesão e relativas ao paciente. O programa estatístico SPSS 20.0 for Windows foi utilizado para a análise descritiva dos dados.

**Resultados:** Durante 43 anos foram observados 719 casos de FEM (54,7% homens e 45,3% mulheres), sendo o lábio inferior ( $n = 484$ ; 67,3%) o local de principal acometimento. A média de idade dos pacientes foi de 20,8 anos (DP  $\pm$  14,4), com um pico de ocorrência na segunda década de vida. A maioria dos profissionais teve mucocele oral/rânula ( $n = 606$ ; 84,3%) como primeira hipótese clínica.

**Conclusão:** O FEM é uma lesão que afeta principalmente pacientes jovens, acometendo preferencialmente o lábio inferior, sendo comumente encontrada nos serviços de diagnóstico oral.

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## Introduction

Mucoceles are common benign pseudocystic lesions of the oral cavity that develop secondary to leakage or retention of mucous material from salivary glands, principally the minor salivary glands.<sup>1</sup> These lesions account for 70% of cystic and pseudocystic lesions of the salivary glands, thus they can appear anywhere on the oral mucosa where there is a salivary gland.<sup>1,2</sup>

Etiologic factors involved in mucocele formation include trauma and ductal obstruction,<sup>3,4</sup> which may lead to formation of two histological presentations: the phenomenon of mucus retention or extravasation.<sup>1,5</sup> The mucus extravasation phenomena (MEP) are actually pseudocysts, as they are devoid of epithelial lining. The extravasated mucus induces an inflammatory and granular reaction in an attempt to contain the extravasation.<sup>4,6</sup> This type of mucocele is commonly found in minor salivary glands.<sup>7</sup> The mucus retention phenomenon (MRP) induces formation of another type of

mucocele: the mucus retention cyst or sialocyst.<sup>1</sup> Most of these grow from major salivary glands and ducts and have the following etiological factors: sialolithiasis, periductal scarring, or invasive tumors.<sup>5,7</sup> Histopathologically, MRP are characterized by epithelium lining coming from the partially obstructed salivary duct.<sup>4</sup>

Clinically, there is no difference between the mucus extravasation and retention phenomena, and both present with increased volume of cystic appearance, are painless, soft to palpation, and show a transparent bluish color.<sup>2</sup> The most common site of extravasation mucoceles is the lower lip, which is also the most susceptible place to injuries. Such location is less common in retention mucoceles,<sup>2,5</sup> which may affect any other site of the oral cavity.<sup>8</sup> Extravasation mucoceles affect young patients (20–30 years) and usually resolve spontaneously, requiring surgical excision in some cases.<sup>2</sup> Micro-marsupialization, cryosurgery, steroid injections, and CO<sub>2</sub> laser have been described as treatments available for these lesions.<sup>2,5,8,9</sup>

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