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Case report

A case of ectopic salivary gland of the larynx

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ABSTRACT

A 46-year-old man presented with sore throat. Laryngoscopic findings revealed a smooth yellow mass occupying the anterior portion of the false vocal fold on the left side. The authors performed biopsy under general anesthesia. The histopathological diagnosis was ectopic salivary gland. Because salivary glands are usually not found under the false vocal fold mucosa, ectopic salivary gland of the larynx was diagnosed.

It is necessary to consider the possibility of ectopic salivary gland for mass lesions if swelling of the provisional vocal cord is found.

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1. Introduction

Ectopic salivary gland of the larynx (ESGL) is extremely rare; only 4 cases have been reported in the English literature [1] (Table 1).

Ectopic salivary glands have been observed in various locations throughout the body, especially near the line connecting the external ear canal and the medial border of the clavicle [2]. The most frequently reported area is the middle ear. The first case of ESGL was reported by Kruk-Zagajewska et al. [3]. To our knowledge, we report the fifth case of this anomaly.

2. Case report

A 46-year-old man presented with a sore throat. Laryngeal endoscopic examination revealed a smooth yellow mass occupying the anterior portion of the false vocal fold on the left side (Fig. 1). Vocal cord paralysis was not evident. Results of blood tests were normal (white blood cell count 9.5×10^9/L; C-reactive protein 0.3 mg/L).

A computed tomography scan revealed a nodule, approximately 10 mm in size, on the left side of the false vocal cord (Fig. 2). The lungs were examined for suspected hilar lymphadenopathy and lung field lesions; however, no abnormalities or swelling of the lymph nodes were found. Magnetic resonance imaging did not detect tumorous lesions in the pharynx (Fig. 3).

The pain had disappeared naturally. To exclude nodular lesions, such as amyloidosis, a biopsy was performed under general anesthesia. There were normal secretory glands in the shallow layer (Fig. 4a). However, in contrast, salivary glands containing serous and mucous glands were found in the deep layer (Fig. 4b). Salivary glands are usually not found under the temporary vocal fold mucosa. The histopathological diagnosis was ectopic salivary gland. Following the biopsy procedure, the patient experienced a satisfactory course of recovery. The patient has undergone regular follow-up on an outpatient basis and, to date, the lesion has not progressed.

3. Discussion

An ectopic salivary gland refers to the presence of salivary gland tissue in an area other than the site where salivary glands

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Table 1
Literature reports of ectopic salivary gland of the larynx.

Case	Age, years	Sex	Chief complaint	Anatomical location	Author (reference)
1	56	Male	Hoarseness	Provisional vocal cord	Kruk-Zagajewska et al. [3]
2	70	Male	Cough	Provisional vocal cord	Yamanaka [4]
3	65	Male	Pharynx discomfort	Provisional vocal cord	Yamanaka [4]
4	75	Male	Hoarseness	Provisional vocal cord	Yamaguchi et al. [1]
5	46	Male	Sore throat	Provisional vocal cord	Tajima (present study)

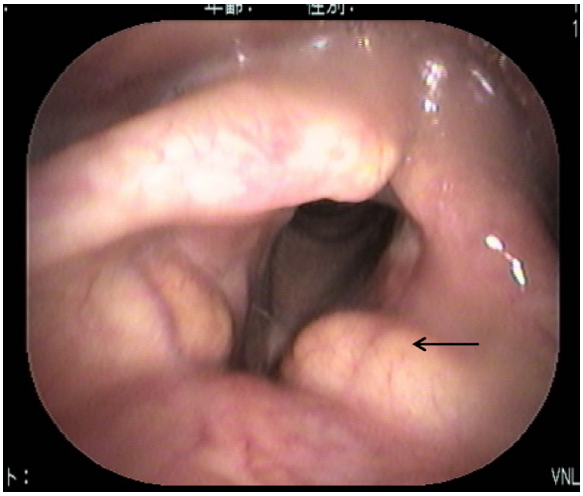


Fig. 1. Laryngeal endoscopic examination revealing a smooth yellow mass (arrow) occupying the anterior portion of the false vocal fold on the left side. (For interpretation of the references to color in this figure legend, the reader is referred to the web version of this article.)

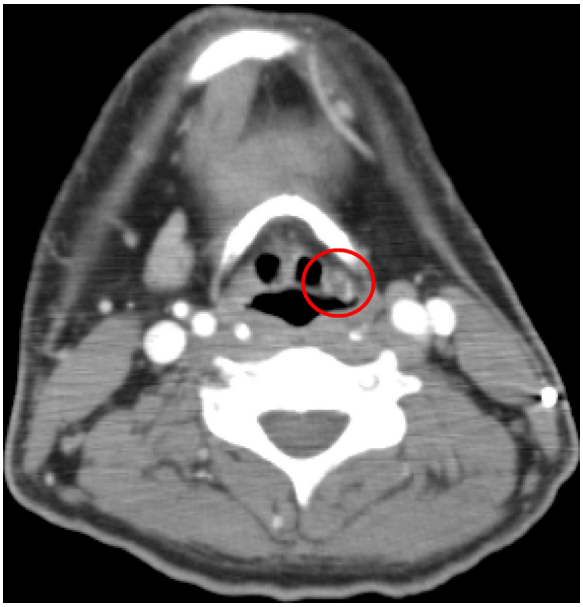
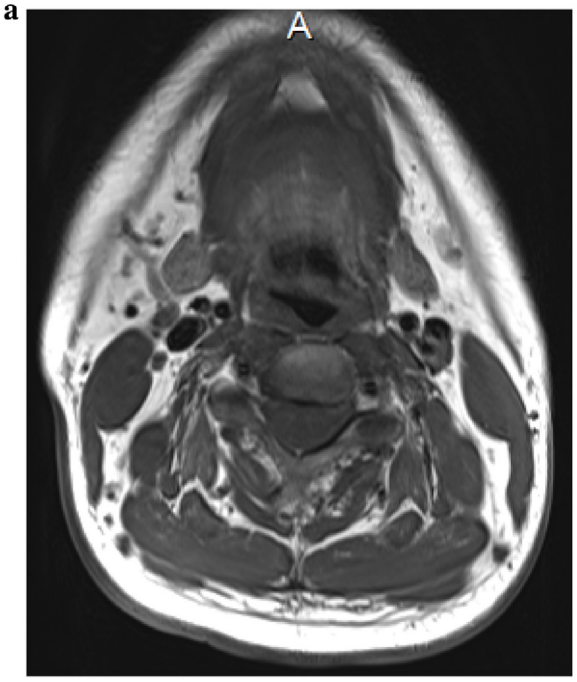


Fig. 2. Computed tomography revealing a nodule approximately 10 mm in size on the left side of the false vocal cord (circled). Swelling of lymph nodes was not apparent.



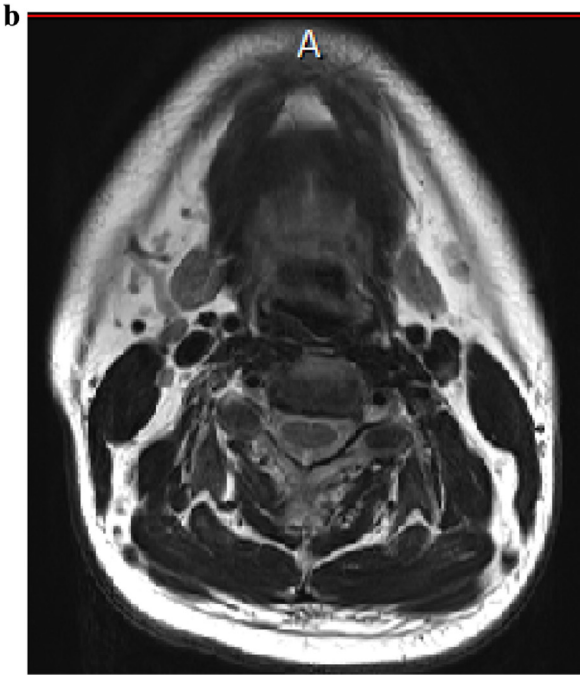


Fig. 3. Neither inflammation nor neoplastic lesions were apparent on T1- (a) and T2 (b)-weighted magnetic resonance imaging.

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