



## DENTAL ANOMALIES IN PATIENTS WITH CLEFT LIP AND/OR PALATE

## Medical Science

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## ABSTRACT

**Background:** Individuals with cleft lip and palate (CLP) show a high frequency of dental anomalies. These anomalies may complicate orthodontic treatment and oral rehabilitation. The aim of the present study was to evaluate the prevalence of dental anomalies in individuals with non-syndromic cleft lip and/or palate according to gender and type of cleft. **Methods:** one hundred and twelve children (59 males and 53 females aged five to 12 years (mean age 7.96 years) were included in this study. We analyzed dental anomalies in the premaxillary region according to the gender and the cleft type by examining medical records, intra-oral photographs, dental casts and panoramic radiographs. Fisher's exact test and Chi-square test were applied to determine whether any statistical differences exist or not between cleft types and gender. The level of significance was set at  $p \leq 0.05$ . **Results:** Overall 86.6% of subjects were found to have at least one dental anomaly. The frequency was slightly more ( $p=0.07$ ) in females (90.56%) compared to males (77.96%). Agenesis ( $n=49$ , 43.8%) and ectopic eruption (22.3%) of teeth were the two most common dental anomalies. The most commonly affected tooth was the primary maxillary lateral incisor in this study. The frequency of anomalies did not differ significantly between unilateral and bilateral cleft types.

## KEYWORDS

Cleft lip and palate, Dental anomalies, tooth agenesis, supernumerary tooth, microdontia, enamel hypoplasia

## INTRODUCTION

Cleft lip and/or palate (CLP) is the most common birth-deformity of the orofacial region.<sup>[1-6]</sup> Worldwide, their incidence is 1 in 700 newborns. The etiology of CLP is multifactorial with both genetic and environmental factors playing an important role. Similar to the general population, individuals with orofacial cleft show developmental dental disturbances. There appears to be a close genetic and anatomic relationship between the development of lip, palate and tooth buds.<sup>[7,8]</sup> Moreover, some investigators suggest that these anomalies may represent an additional clinical marker for CLP.<sup>[6,8,9]</sup>

Dental anomalies may occur in and outside the cleft area and both primary and permanent dentition may be affected. The lateral incisor in the alveolar cleft region has the highest prevalence of congenital dental deformities. In the current literature, tooth anomalies of number are reported as the most frequent dental anomalies among the cleft patients.<sup>[9-13]</sup> These anomalies include agenesis of tooth and supernumerary teeth. According to Lopes et al.<sup>[14]</sup> (1991), the tooth abnormalities of number are seven times more frequent in individuals with cleft lip and/or palate compared to the overall population. Furthermore, with increasing severity of the cleft, the number of missing teeth increases.<sup>[6,14-16]</sup>

The prevalence of congenital dental malformations in individuals with CLP has been found to vary depending on geographic location and ethnic background. For example, Al-Kharboush et al.<sup>[11]</sup> found dental anomalies in 91.4% Saudi individuals with CLP and hypodontia (46.5%) was the most prevalent dental anomaly, followed by microdontia (31.6%), ectopic eruption (10.4%) and supernumerary tooth (9%). Similarly, Sá et al.<sup>[17]</sup> observed dental deformities in 88.2% of cleft patients in Brazil. They reported tooth agenesis (47.1%), rotation (20%) and microdontia (15.5%) as the most common anomalies. Nicholls found 94% of the cleft population with at least one dental anomaly. Agenesis (15%) was the most prevalent, and supernumerary teeth were found in 10% of patients. Menezes et al.<sup>[6]</sup> observed 47 individuals (32.19%) with one or more specific dental anomaly. Rullo, et al.<sup>[13]</sup> (2015) found a high prevalence of enamel defects in cleft population.

Individuals with CLP suffer from a variety of problems including malocclusion and maintenance of oral hygiene. The presence of various types of dental deformities may complicate orthodontic treatment and oral rehabilitation. Therefore knowledge of developmental anomalies is essential for successful dental treatment. The majority of previous reports have described dental developmental disturbances in European, Brazilian and Arabic cleft populations. To the best of our knowledge, no such study was carried out among the Bengali population with CLP. Therefore, the present study was designed to evaluate the prevalence of dental anomalies among the

homogeneous Bengali population and their possible association with the gender and various cleft subphenotypes.

## Methods

## Subjects

In this retrospective cross-sectional study, pretreatment orthodontic records of individuals born with non-syndromic orofacial cleft were investigated. These records include panoramic, periapical and upper occlusal radiographs, intra-oral photographs, and dental casts. Subjects with cleft lip and/or palate aged between 5 and 12 years were randomly selected. Exclusion criteria were: patients who had previous orthodontic treatment, dental extraction, the absence of radiographs and incomplete dental records. Ethical approval for the present study was obtained from the Ethical committee of our institute.

## Determination Of Cleft Type

The determination of cleft type was based on the examination of dental casts, radiographs, and description in the medical records. The orofacial clefts were classified into the following types: cleft lip only (CL), unilateral left cleft lip and palate (ULCLP), unilateral right cleft lip and palate (URCLP), bilateral cleft lip and palate (BCLP), and isolated cleft palate (CP).

## Dental Evaluation

Data on tooth abnormalities of each subject were recorded on standardized forms. Dental anomalies in and outside the cleft in the premaxillary region were investigated. In order to avoid inter-examiner differences, all records were investigated by one trained examiner (SM). Radiographs were examined in a darkroom after mounting on a view box. In addition, intra-oral photographs and dental casts were also examined for determination of dental anomalies. The following anomalies were investigated:

1. Agenesis: Absence of a tooth germ both clinically as well as radiographically.
2. Rotation: Mesio or disto—lingual displacement of teeth.
3. Ectopic eruption: When a tooth does not follow its usual course.
4. Supernumerary teeth: Teeth present in addition to its normal series.
5. Microdontia: When a tooth appears smaller than normal
6. Enamel hypoplasia: When there is an obvious discontinuity of surface enamel or the surface may be intact with white, yellow or brownish discolouration.

## Statistical Analysis

The analysis was performed using statistical software Epi Info version 7.2 (CDC, Atlanta, USA). The occurrence of dental anomalies was expressed as frequency and percentage of the total sample using descriptive statistics. Fisher's exact test and Chi-square test were applied to determine whether any statistical differences exist or not between cleft types and gender. The level of significance was set at  $p \leq 0.05$ .

## RESULTS

In this study, 112 cleft subjects were almost equally divided among males (n=59, 52.7%) and females (n=53, 47.3%). The mean age of the patients was 7.96 year. The most frequently observed cleft types were by UCLP-L (n=42, 37.5%) followed BCLP (n=37, 33%), UCLP-R (n=14, 12.5%) and CL (n=10, 8.9%). Only 9 subjects (8%) had CP. [Table 1] The distribution of cleft types did not vary significantly between male and female subjects ( $P>0.05$ , Chi-square).

**Table1. Distribution Of Cleft Subtypes According To Genders**

| Gender       | UCLP       |             | BCLP     | CL      | CP     |
|--------------|------------|-------------|----------|---------|--------|
|              | Left N (%) | Right N (%) | N (%)    | N (%)   | N(%)   |
| Male(N=59)   | 25(42.4)   | 9(15.3)     | 16(27.1) | 5(8.5)  | 4(6.8) |
| Female(N=53) | 17(32.1)   | 5(9.4)      | 21(39.6) | 5(9.4)  | 5(9.4) |
| Total(N=112) | 42(37.5)   | 14(12.5)    | 37(33)   | 10(8.9) | 9(8)   |

Overall 86.6% (n=97) of subjects were found to have at least one dental anomaly. A higher incidence of the dental anomaly was observed in females (n=48, 90.56%) compared to males (n=46, 77.96%), although this difference was not statistically significant ( $p=0.07$ ).

**Table2. Distribution Of Dental Anomalies According To Gender**

| Dental anomalies    | Total N (%) | Male N (%) | Female N (%) | Fisher Exact |
|---------------------|-------------|------------|--------------|--------------|
| Agensis of tooth    | 49(43.8)    | 24(40.7)   | 25(47.2)     | 0.26         |
| Rotation            | 24(21.4)    | 15(25.4)   | 9(16.9)      | 0.85         |
| Ectopic eruption    | 25(22.3)    | 13(22)     | 12(22.6)     | 0.25         |
| Supernumerary tooth | 19(16)      | 10(16.9)   | 9(15.1)      | 0.45         |
| Microdontia         | 12(10.7)    | 6(11.7)    | 6(11.3)      | NS           |
| Enamel hypoplasia   | 8(7.1)      | 3(5.1)     | 5(9.4)       | 0.85         |

Table 2 shows the distribution of dental anomalies according to gender. The most frequently observed anomaly was agensis of the tooth (n=49, 43.8%) and enamel hypoplasia (n=8, 7.1%) was the least prevalent anomaly in this study.

**Table3. Distribution Of Dental Anomalies According To Cleft Types**

|                     | UCLP (n=56) |    |              |   | BCLP (n=37) |    | CL (n=10) |   | CP (n=9) |   |
|---------------------|-------------|----|--------------|---|-------------|----|-----------|---|----------|---|
|                     | Left (n=42) |    | Right (n=14) |   |             |    |           |   |          |   |
|                     | M           | F  | M            | F | M           | F  | M         | F | M        | F |
| Agensis of tooth    | 12          | 7  | 2            | 4 | 7           | 10 | 2         | 2 | 1        | 2 |
| Rotation            | 7           | 3  | 2            | 1 | 3           | 4  | 2         | 0 | 1        | 1 |
| Supernumerary tooth | 4           | 2  | 1            | 1 | 3           | 3  | 2         | 1 | 0        | 2 |
| Ectopic eruption    | 5           | 6  | 2            | 1 | 4           | 5  | 0         | 0 | 2        | 0 |
| Microdontia         | 3           | 2  | 2            | 0 | 1           | 3  | 0         | 0 | 0        | 1 |
| Enamel hypoplasia   | 2           | 0  | 1            | 0 | 0           | 4  | 0         | 1 | 0        | 0 |
| Total               | 33          | 20 | 10           | 7 | 18          | 29 | 6         | 4 | 4        | 6 |

Table 3 describes the distribution of the dental anomalies according to cleft types. Overall, 198 dental anomalies were observed in 112 cleft subjects. Agensis of the tooth was the most commonly occurring dental anomaly in all cleft types. The frequency of anomalies did not differ significantly between UCLP and BCLP; [Table 4] Overall, 193 anomalous teeth were observed. The most commonly affected tooth was the primary maxillary lateral incisor (35.2%), closely followed by the permanent maxillary lateral incisor (32.6%). The other affected teeth in decreasing frequency were permanent maxillary central incisor (17.6%), primary maxillary central incisor (10.4%), primary maxillary canine (2.6%) and permanent maxillary canine (1.5%)

**Table4. Comparison Of Anomalies Between Unilateral And Bilateral Cleft Lip And Palate**

| Type of anomaly     | Cleft type UCLP(N=56) |      | BCLP (N=37) |      | Level Of Significance |
|---------------------|-----------------------|------|-------------|------|-----------------------|
|                     | N                     | %    | N           | %    |                       |
| Agensis             | 25                    | 44.6 | 17          | 45.9 | NS                    |
| Rotation            | 13                    | 23.2 | 07          | 18.9 | NS                    |
| Ectopic eruption    | 14                    | 25   | 09          | 24.3 | NS                    |
| Supernumerary tooth | 08                    | 14.3 | 06          | 16.2 | NS                    |
| Microdontia         | 07                    | 12.5 | 4           | 10.8 | NS                    |
| Enamel hypoplasia   | 03                    | 05.4 | 4           | 10.8 | NS                    |

## DISCUSSION

Individuals with orofacial cleft demonstrate a high incidence of developmental dental disturbances compared with the general population.<sup>[12,13,15,17-19]</sup> In this study, we observed 86.6% of the cleft

population with at least one dental anomaly. This is comparable with the findings of Al-Kharboush et al.<sup>[11]</sup> (91.4%), Nicholls<sup>[31]</sup> (94%), Sá et al.<sup>[17]</sup> (88.2%) but higher than the results of Al Jamal et al.<sup>[20]</sup> (66.7%), Aizenbud et al.<sup>[21]</sup> (67.6%) and Menezes and Vieira<sup>[6]</sup> (32.2%). The variation in prevalence could be attributed to the differences in populations, sample size differences, type and severity of cleft, the inclusion of specific dental anomaly and type of dentition involved.

Baek and Kim<sup>[22]</sup> (2007) stressed the importance of a classification of cleft types since the cleft phenotype might affect the pattern of developmental dental disturbances. In our study, the cleft subjects were subdivided into four groups and the most frequent cleft subtype was ULCLP (37.5%) which is three times more frequent than the URCLP (12.5%). This is in agreement with the results of Dewinter et al.<sup>[11]</sup> (2003) and Akcam et al.<sup>[12]</sup> (2010), Qureshi et al.<sup>[23]</sup> (2012) and Shapira et al.<sup>[24]</sup> (2014) who also reported that the left-sided cleft was more prevalent than the right-sided cleft. This is probably due to the greater blood supply to the right side of the face than on the left side.

Pedro et al.<sup>[25]</sup> (2012) investigated the cleft type distribution by gender and observed a higher prevalence of complete ULCLP and complete BCLP in males and isolated CP in females. Letra et al.<sup>[8]</sup> (2007), and Menezes and Vieira<sup>[6]</sup>, (2008) also noted similar findings. In contrast with their observations, our analysis did not reveal any significant difference in the distribution of cleft subtypes and gender. Moreover, the results of the present study found no relationship between dental anomalies and gender. This is in contrast with the finding of Wangsrinongkol et al.<sup>[26]</sup> who reported a gender- dependent pattern in tooth agensis in cleft population but supports the results of Ribeiro et al.<sup>[27]</sup> (2003), Akcam et al.<sup>[12]</sup> (2010), Al-Kharboush et al.<sup>[11]</sup> (2015) and Konstantonis et al.<sup>[28]</sup> (2017). These investigators also observed no significant differences in dental anomalies between genders.

Some studies have reported a correlation between severity of cleft and frequency of dental anomalies. For instance, Menezes and Vieira<sup>[6]</sup> (2008) reported that patients with CP were more affected by dental anomalies than were individuals with CL or CLP. Individuals with isolated CL type exhibit fewer dental anomalies as there is less amount of mesenchymal tissue deficiency. Some investigators have observed that the occurrence of tooth agensis is directly proportional whereas supernumerary tooth is inversely proportional to the extent of the cleft.<sup>[14,29]</sup> Paranaiba et al.<sup>[30]</sup> (2013), however, showed that dental anomalies were more common in individuals with unilateral CLP than with bilateral CLP. Sá et al.<sup>[17]</sup> (2016) also made a similar observation. On the other hand, Rullo et al.<sup>[13]</sup> (2015) observed that the number of dental anomalies was not correlated with the severity of the cleft. Our results also showed that the frequency of anomalies did not differ significantly between UCLP and BCLP cases. Therefore, further studies are required to sort out this controversy.

Consistent with previous reports, the present study showed that tooth agensis was the most frequently occurring dental anomaly in the cleft population. In the present investigation, 43.8% of the study population exhibited agensis of the tooth and congenital absence of the maxillary lateral incisor was the most common finding. This is comparable with the results of Stahl et al.<sup>[30]</sup> (46.6%) and Sá et al.<sup>[17]</sup> (45.9%), but higher than the finding of a study which reported a 4.7% prevalence of hypodontia in the Bengali population.<sup>[31]</sup> Aizenbud et al.<sup>[21]</sup> (67.7%) Shapira et al.<sup>[24]</sup> (77%) and Tereza et al.<sup>[4]</sup> (70.2%) have reported a greater prevalence of tooth agensis in the cleft individuals. The difference in prevalence is probably due to the inclusion of tooth agensis outside the cleft area in some studies. For instance, Letra et al.<sup>[8]</sup> (2007), Menezes and Vieira,<sup>[6]</sup> (2008) and Pedro et al.<sup>[25]</sup> (2012) did not include tooth agensis in the cleft area.

In agreement with the current literature, the present study showed that maxillary lateral incisor is the most commonly missing teeth in patients with CLP. Akcam et al.<sup>[12]</sup> (2010) postulated that the lateral incisor tooth bud may be damaged secondary to surgical repair of palate. In addition, deficiency of the mesenchymal tissue and compromised blood supply in the cleft region may also adversely affect tooth development. Ribeiro et al.<sup>[27]</sup>, (2003), and many other investigators have observed that tooth agensis is approximately four times more common in individuals with CLP than in the general population. In this study, tooth agensis did not differ significantly between UCLP and BCLP. This is in contrast with the results of Qureshi et al.<sup>[23]</sup> (2012) who observed that single tooth agensis was more frequent in UCLP subjects, whereas agensis of multiple teeth

was more frequent in BCLP children. Previous studies have related MSX1, TGFA, PAX9, FGFR1, and IRF6, genes related to oral clefts, are associated with isolated tooth agenesis.<sup>[32]</sup>

Ectopic eruption is considered a positional anomaly and occurs due to local as well as systemic factors.<sup>[34]</sup> Its prevalence in the general population ranges from 1.5 to 2% for the permanent canine.<sup>[12,13]</sup> In this study ectopic eruption of the tooth was the second most common dental anomaly accounting for 22.3% of cases. This is higher than the findings of Rullo et al.,<sup>[13]</sup> (2015, 18.9%), Al-Kharboush et al.<sup>[1]</sup> (2015, 12.3%), Sá et al.,<sup>[17]</sup> (2015, 3.8%), and Costa et al.<sup>[33]</sup> (2012, 5.3%) The difference in prevalence could be due to inclusion of dental transposition by some investigators as a separate group of anomaly.

Rotation of tooth accounted for 21.4% of cases in the current study. This is higher than the result of Costa et al.,<sup>[33]</sup> (13.2%), but comparable with the result of Sá et al.,<sup>[17]</sup> (2015, 20%), and Rullo et al.,<sup>[13]</sup> (2015, 25%). Moreover, in agreement with the observation of Sá et al.,<sup>[17]</sup> (2015) our study also showed that rotation is more prevalent in UCLP cases. Smahel et al.<sup>[34]</sup> (1996) concluded that insufficient space is a probable cause of rotation adjacent to the cleft. Meazzini et al.,<sup>[35]</sup> instead, related rotation of tooth as a consequence of the surgery carried out to repair the cleft.

Prevalence of supernumerary tooth range from 0.3 to 3.8 percent in the general population.<sup>[36]</sup> In this study, we observed a high frequency (16%) of this anomaly which is in agreement with the findings of Costa et al.,<sup>[33]</sup> (13.2%) and Al-Jamal et al.,<sup>[20]</sup> (16.7%). Nicholls<sup>[5]</sup> suggests that supernumeraries in CLP patients arise during cleft formation from fragmented dental lamina. Microdontia is another anomaly frequently seen in patients with CLP. Lygstadaas et al.,<sup>[37]</sup> (1996) and Pinho et al.<sup>[38]</sup> (2005) observed that microdontia is the partial expression of the same genetic defect that results in tooth agenesis. In this study, this anomaly was found in 10.7% of cases which is comparable with the result of Sá et al.<sup>[17]</sup> (18.4%).

Ruiz et al.,<sup>[39]</sup> have noted a high percentage of enamel defects in the cleft side and suggest that the cleft may cause enamel hypoplasia. The overall incidence of enamel hypoplasia is 7.1% in this study which is comparable with the result of Nicholls who observed it in 6% of children with cleft lip and palate in Western Australia.

## CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study showed that 86.6% of patients with orofacial cleft were found to have at least one dental anomaly. Tooth agenesis (43.8%) was the most common dental anomaly and most frequently affected tooth was the primary maxillary lateral incisor (35.2%). Although a high prevalence of dental anomalies was observed in children with unilateral and bilateral cleft lip and palate, no significant difference was observed among cleft sub-types.

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