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Prevalence of Oral Lichen Planus in Northern Thai Patients with Hepatitis C Virus Infection

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Abstract

Objectives: This study aimed to investigate the prevalence of oral lichen planus (OLP) among individuals with hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection in upper northern Thailand and the potential association between OLP and HCV infection.

Methods: This cross-sectional study involved 1,025 participants, comprising 126 patients with confirmed HCV infection and 899 participants without HCV. All participants underwent structured interviews and clinical oral examinations by calibrated examiners. The diagnosis of OLP was established based on characteristic clinical features and confirmed by histopathological examination of oral mucosal biopsies. The statistical analysis used Pearson's Chi-square test and Fisher's exact test, with a significance level of $p < 0.05$.

Results: The prevalence of OLP was 2.38% in patients with HCV infection and 0.33% in those without HCV. The difference in OLP prevalence between the two groups was statistically significant ($p = 0.027$), suggesting a possible association between HCV infection and the development of OLP.

Conclusions: The findings indicated a significant association between HCV infection and OLP in this northern Thai cohort. Therefore, screening for OLP in patients with HCV is recommended for early detection and appropriate management.

Keywords: cross-sectional studies, hepatitis c virus, oral lichen planus, prevalence, Thailand