

Clinical And Radiographic Aspects Of Chronic Osteomyelitis In Amphetamine Addicts.

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Chronic osteomyelitis of the mandible and maxilla in amphetamine addicts was studied. Clinical, radiographic and bacteriologic investigations were performed. Patients were followed up for 5 years. The abnormal aggressive clinical picture of the disease and delayed healing may be attributed to amphetamine addiction.

Amphetamines (Max-Forte) abuse began in 1940. It was one of the popular stimulants which have few medical uses but high addiction potential. It is used by inhalation, oral administration or intravenous injection¹. Their effect on the body is similar to that of ephedrine, but their interest is their potent central stimulation with wakefulness and heightened mood. They are sometimes medically used in the treatment of obesity, as respiratory stimulant (in barbiturate poisoning), and in depressive psychic states².

Medical complications in chronic amphetamine addiction involving multiple organ systems as immune system, upper respiratory tract infection, hepatitis, skin abscesses and tetanus after subcutaneous injection have been reported with variable frequency, but a direct relationship between these diseases and drug abuse has not been established³⁻⁶.

Reviews of clinical experience with hematogenous osteomyelitis by Waldvogel⁷ have referred to the possible contributory role of intravenous self-inoculation. However many cases of chronic osteomyelitis have been reported in addicts⁸⁻¹⁰.

Osteomyelitis is a serious sequelae of nonwalled off odontogenic infection. The causative organism may be introduced as a result of periapical inflammation, fracture or hematogenous spread from another site¹¹⁻¹⁵. Osteomyelitis had been reported to be remarkably severe in immunosuppressed patients e.g. steroid therapy or chemotherapy, and in addiction cases⁸⁻¹².

The purpose of this paper is to stress the increased incidence of chronic osteomyelitis in the jaws of amphetamine (Max-Fort) addict patients.

Material And Method

Ten patients complaining of chronic osteomyelitis were the subject of this study. The diagnosis was based on clinical, radiographic and bacteriologic fin-

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