Introduction
Malignant Melanoma originates from the malignant transformation of melanocytes. Oral melanoma is not as common as cutaneous melanoma and it primarily occurs on the skin and occasionally develops from oral mucosa. Malignant Melanoma of the oral cavity is a rare condition accounting for 0.2 to 8% of all melanomas. In Japan oral Malignant Melanoma is relatively common, with about 50% of cases occurring in the hard palate and the upper gingiva. The age range for patients with oral Malignant Melanoma is from 40 to 70 years, the average age being 55 years. Rapini et al found that the highest percentage of oral melanomas occurred in the age range of 41 to 60 years (45% of 332 patients). Oral Malignant Melanoma is rare before the age of 20 years. It occurs most frequently in maxilla with the palate as a common site (32%); maxillary gingiva is the second most frequent area of incidence (16%). There are no specific etiological factors identified for oral melanomas. There appear to be no geographic differences and possibly only slight ethnic and gender differences. Cigarette smoking, denture irritation and alcohol have been suggested as risk factors for mucosal melanoma. This paper reports a case of oral malignant melanoma in a 55 year old male patient.

Case Report
A 55 year old man reported to the dental clinic with chief complaint of painless swelling and loosening of teeth in the anterior maxilla that started 6 months earlier. The patient gave history of bidi smoking for the past 10 years. He consumed an average of 20 cigarettes per day. The examination revealed a mass which was soft in consistency, pedunculated and extending from 14 to 55 maxillary region. Intra oral examination revealed a mass which was soft in consistency, pedunculated and extending from 14 to 55 maxillary region. Intra oral examination revealed a mass which was soft in consistency, pedunculated and extending from 14 to 55 maxillary region.

Discussion
Melanoma is a malignant neoplasm arising from the neural crest cells. During embryologic development, melanocytes migrate from the neural crest into the epithelial lining of the skin and, in the developed skin; they reside primarily in the basal epithelial layer. Oral Malignant Melanoma is the neoplasm of melanocytes. In oral mucosa melanocytes are located along the tips and peripheries of the rete pegs. The ratio of melanocytes to keratinocytes in the gingiva is 1:15. Melanocytes differ from nevus cells and melanoma cells in showing features of pleomorphism, hyperchromatism, prominent nucleoli and mitotic activity. The etiology of oral Malignant Melanoma is unknown in contrast to cutaneous melanoma, which is linked to sun exposure. Cigarette smoking, denture irritation, and alcohol have been suggested as risk factors for oral melanoma.

Differential Diagnosis: Most of melanomas grow rapidly and the dentists should be cautious when confronted with large pigmented lesion. Differential diagnosis include oral melanotic macule, smoking-associated melanosis, medication induced melanosis (ant malarial drugs and Minocycline), Melanoplakia, pituitary based cushing syndrome, post inflammatory pigmentation, melanocanthoma, melanocytic nevi of the oral mucosa, blue nevi, nevi of spitz, Addison’s disease, Peutz-jegher’s syndrome, amalgam tattoo, Kaposi’s sarcoma, physiologic pigmentation, pigmentation related with the use of heavy metals, and many other conditions sharing some macroscopic characteristics.

Management: Surgery is the mainstay of the treatment, but can be difficult due to anatomic restraints. Although melanoma is classically not radiosensitive, occasional patients have shown a good response to radiation therapy, especially in early or in site melanomas. Immunotherapy has been successfully used but chemotherapy has demonstrated a relatively low response rate.

Oral Malignant Melanoma: A Case Report

Balasundari Shreedhar, Daksh Sharma, Mudita Chaturvedi

ABSTRACT
Malignant Melanoma is the cancer of melanocytes that primarily occurs on the skin but occasionally develops from oral mucosa. Malignant Melanoma of the oral cavity is a rare condition accounting for about 0.2 to 8% of all melanomas. This paper reports a case of oral malignant melanoma in a 55 year old male patient.

Keywords: Malignant melanoma; Melanoma; Oral lesion; Oral malignant melanoma; Melanocytes; Biopsy
Conclusion
In conclusion oral melanoma is a rarer lesion which basically originates from the malignant transformation of melanocytes. There are no specific etiological factors identified for oral melanomas. In the present case of Malignant Melanoma of the maxillary gingival clinical presentation was just painless swelling and loosening of teeth in the anterior maxilla that started 6 months earlier but on histological examination it was found that there was ulcerated growth with solid sheets and nests of oval to elongated cells. Tumor cells show vesicular nuclei, prominent nucleoli and ill-defined cytoplasm with focal pigmentation. So clinician's must be always vigilant to find these rare lesions.

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