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ORIGINAL TITLE	Oral lesions found in smokers: a sociological, aetiological, pathological and follow -up study
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ABSTRACT	<p>This dissertation includes studies on: 1. The knowledge, attitude, and opinions of smokers and the socio-economic aspects of smoking. 2. Detailed analysis on the aetiological aspects of oral lesions found in smokers as regards to smoking, betel chewing and mixed habits 3. Detailed pathological studies of oral lesions found in smokers from whom 141 biopsies were performed and histopathologically analysed in the first examination and 4. follow-up studies after a 2-3 year interval (1986-1989, 1987-1989) on 42 subjects from whom biopsies were obtained in the first examination and 31 subjects from whom biopsies have been obtained in the second examination. A statistically significant sample was obtained from five out of the 24 administrative districts of Sri Lanka. General hospitals situated in these districts were used as sampling centres. A total of 1648 subjects in the age groups 20 years and above were studied. Males only were studied, as very few females smoke in Sri Lanka. Valuable data emerged on: 1. The prevalence of smoking in a Sri Lankan population, 2. The subjects knowledge, attitude and opinions relating to smoking, 3. The association between socio-economic factors and smoking, 4. The occurrence of oral lesions in smokers, 5. The interactions of various factors affecting oral precancerous lesions and oral cancer, 6. The identification of histopathological changes that can be related to clinical types of oral leukoplakia, 7. The quantitative aspects of the degree of dysplasia in oral leukoplakia, 8. The follow-up rate, 9. The ways to persuade the tobacco habitues to discontinue their tobacco habits and finally 10. The ways to evaluate the changes in the incidence and the pattern of regression of oral precancerous lesions. The prevalence of smoking in the present study in a Sri Lankan population was 68.14 percent. With regard to smoking, cigarette smoking was found to be a common practice in Sri Lanka. There is a significant association between attitude against smoking and prevalence of smoking ($P < .001$). 10% of the smokers were having a positive antismoking attitude and they are concerned about the harmful effects of smoking on their health and the health of nearby non smokers. A significant association was found between prevalence of smoking and socio-economic factors such as educational level, marital status, occupation, income level and also with age and ethnicity ($P < .001$). But no association was found in the subjects living in suburbs, villages and towns. The degree of association for the prevalence of smoking is more with occupation, income level followed by</p>

marital status and age, education and ethnicity in the descending order. Of the 1648 subjects, 366 lesions were found in smokers. The prevalence of leukoedema in the present study was 8.62 percent. The frequency of oral lesions seen among smokers were leukoedema (12.64 percent), leukoplakia (12.64 percent), erythroplakia (0.09percent), oral submucous fibrosis (0.36 percent), oral lichen planus (1.69 percent), leukokeratosis nicotina palati (3.29 percent) and carcinoma (1.87 percent). The average age for subjects with leukoedema, leukoplakia, oral submucous fibrosis, oral lichen planus, leukokeratosis nicotina palati and carcinoma was 43.90, 46.65, 42.20, 44.42, 37.97 and 51.17 years respectively (Table 21) and it was significantly higher than the average age of the rest of the sample except for oral submucous fibrosis and leukokeratosis nicotina palati. Leukoplakia was the commonest precancerous lesions found in smokers. A significant association was found between smoking and leukoplakia ($\chi^2 = 11.85$, $df=1$, $P < .001$). Most of the lesions were found in the age group 40-49 years (Table 26) and the common site of occurrence was the buccal mucous membrane (Table 23). The interactions of age, tobacco smoking and betel chewing on oral precancerous lesions and oral cancer aetiology was analysed by 'Discrete Multivariate Analysis'.....