

Use of a dental mirror in the examination of oral pemphigus



Jerene Mathews, MD, Logamoorthy Ramamoorthy, MBBS, and Laxmisha Chandrashekar, MD, DNB
Pondicherry, India

CLINICAL CHALLENGE

A complete examination of the oral cavity is often difficult in patients with oral pemphigus. Examination of the lateral gingiva especially requires retraction of the lips, which is painful in patients with active lesions over the labial and buccal mucosa. Lesions at the oral commissure restrict mouth opening, resulting in difficulty in viewing the inner aspect of the gingiva.

Complete examination of the oral cavity is necessary to assess the efficacy of interventions, especially in the setting of clinical trials. Scoring indices validated to assess the severity of oral pemphigus include the Oral Disease Severity Score, Pemphigus Disease Area Index, and Autoimmune Bullous Skin Disorder Intensity Score.¹ Accurate calculation of these scores necessitates examination of all parts of the oral cavity. Dental mirrors make it easier to visualize some parts of the oral mucosa, but fogging of the mirror is an issue.

SOLUTION

A dental mirror can be used to minimize the degree of retraction required to visualize the lateral gingiva. It is also useful to visualize the inner aspect of the central gingiva when mouth opening is restricted (Fig 1). Warming the mirror by dipping it in warm saline prevents fogging (Fig 2). Dental mirrors may be used to examine the oral cavity in any painful oral condition.

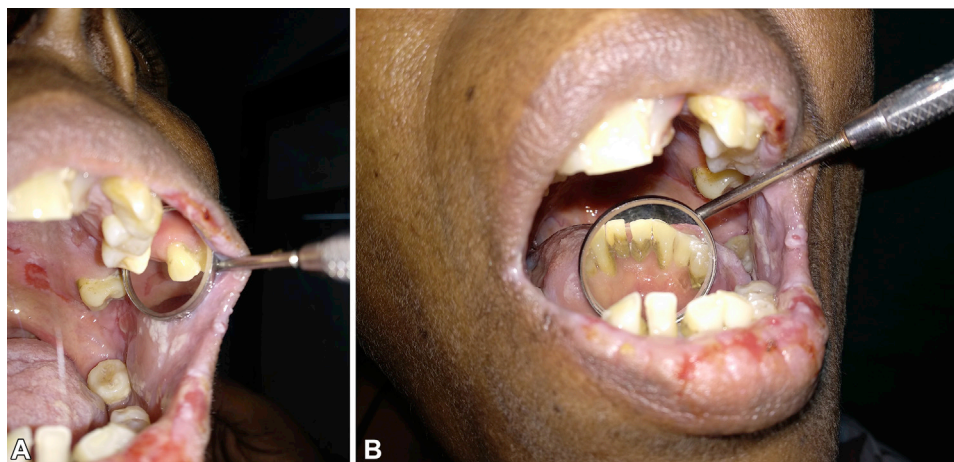


Fig 1. Pemphigus. **A**, Visualization of the upper lateral gingiva with a dental mirror. **B**, Visualization of the inner aspect of the lower central gingiva in the dental mirror.

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Correspondence to: Laxmisha Chandrashekar, MD, DNB, Department of Dermatology, Jawaharlal Institute of

Postgraduate Medical Education and Research, Pondicherry 605006, India. E-mail: laxmishac@gmail.com.

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Fig 2. Dental mirror dipped in warm saline to prevent fogging.

REFERENCE

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