Management Strategies for Oral Submucous Fibrosis- An Update

R. Sudarshan a*#

a Meenakshi Academy of Higher Education and Research, West K.K Nagar, Chennai, India.

Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analysed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

ABSTRACT

There are plentiful management trials in Oral Submucous Fibrosis (OSMF), such as drugs, herbs, and Chinese medicines, but none proved to be entirely successful. So in this review, there are different management strategies tried in the management of OSMF, mechanism of action, and the dosage regimen.

Keywords: Oral submucous fibrosis (OSMF); potentially malignant disorder; management.

1. INTRODUCTION

Oral submucous fibrosis (OSMF) is a chronic disease associated with significant functional morbidity and an increased risk for malignancy. OSMF predominantly affects the Asian population and Asian migrants living in other parts of the World [1].

The management of OSMF has been discussed previously by several authors [3,4,1]. This Review updates the different management protocols available and tried for OSMF.

2. VARIOUS MANAGEMENT OF OSMF IS CATEGORIZED AS FOLLOWS

1. Habit counseling
2. Basic regimen
3. Medical management
4. Physiotherapy
## Table 1. Different drugs tried as management protocols are discussed in the table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl no</th>
<th>Drugs</th>
<th>Mechanism of action</th>
<th>Duration</th>
<th>Dosage</th>
<th>Route of administration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Hydrocortisone [8]</td>
<td>Anti-inflammatory action by inhibiting the generation of inflammatory factors and increasing the apoptosis of inflammatory cells.</td>
<td>once a week for 12 weeks</td>
<td>1.25 cc of injection hydrocortisone on each side</td>
<td>Intralesional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Dexamethasone [9]</td>
<td></td>
<td>10 weeks</td>
<td>4 mg</td>
<td>Intralesional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Triamcinolone acetonide [10]</td>
<td></td>
<td>Divided doses at 10 day intervals for a period of 2-3 months</td>
<td>150-200 mg</td>
<td>Intralesional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Betamethasone [11]</td>
<td></td>
<td>6 hours for 3 weeks</td>
<td>0.5 mg/ml</td>
<td>Topical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Prednisolone [12]</td>
<td></td>
<td>2-4 weeks</td>
<td>20-30 mg</td>
<td>Systemic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Steroids and Physiotherapy [8].</td>
<td>Microwave diathermy at 2450 MC/s and injection of hydrocortisone, vitamin A and B complex.</td>
<td>20 minutes with 15 sittings</td>
<td>20-25 Watts</td>
<td>Selective heating of Juxtaepithelial connective tissue Madalli V et al.,2014)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### STEROIDS

### NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS

8. Vitamins and minerals [13] | The main action is eliminating the deficiency status and normalizing the cellular activity to prevent pathological mechanisms like carcinogenesis. **The hypothesis of vitamin E mechanism**<br>1. Preventing the formation of oxidation products.<br>2. Free radical scavenger Prevent nerve-related pathologies<br>3. Increase the life span of erythrocytes | 6 weeks | Beta Carotene 50mg, vitamin A palmitate 2500 IU, vitamin E acetate, 10 IU with vitamin C, zinc, copper and manganese | oral |

9. Thiocic acid [14]. | Antioxidant | 30 min before or 2 hours after food | 600-1800 mg daily. Iv Dose 300-600 mg |

### BIOGENIC STIMULATORS

10. Placental extracts [9] | It is an aqueous extract of the human placenta that contains nucleotides, enzymes, vitamins, amino acids, and steroids. The mechanism through "biogenic stimulation, and by increasing the recovery [15]." | 10 weeks | 2 cc | Intralesional |
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Papain and urea [16]</td>
<td>Proteolytic enzymes breakdown the inappropriate connective tissue fibrosis [1].</td>
<td>2 to 3 times daily for 15 days</td>
<td>100 gms urea and 100 gms papain</td>
<td>Intraoral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Hyaluronidase [9]</td>
<td>Biweekly for 10 weeks</td>
<td>1500 IU</td>
<td>1 ml of collagenase (1% solution) mixed with 1 ml of xylocaine</td>
<td>Intralesional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Collagenase [17]</td>
<td>Once a week for 6 weeks</td>
<td>1 ml of collagenase (1% solution) mixed with 1 ml of xylocaine</td>
<td>Intralesional</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Borneol [18]</td>
<td>Anti-fibrosis activity inhibits fibroblasts mitosis, collagen, and TIMP-1 production and can be used as a penetration enhancer [18].</td>
<td>Incubation period of 24,48 and 72 hours.</td>
<td>serial dilution of borneol (18.75, 37.5, 75, 150–300 lg/ml)</td>
<td>Penetration enhancing effects tried in mice fibroblast Invitro study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Nyldrin hydrochloride [19]</td>
<td>Nyldrin relaxes and dilates the blood vessel ensures more excellent blood supply to ischemic tissues with little or no change in the blood pressure and heart rate [19].</td>
<td>3-8 weeks</td>
<td>6 mg</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Pentoxifylline [20]</td>
<td>It is a methylxanthine derivative with vasodilating properties and was envisaged to increase mucosal vasularity Rajendran et al., [20].</td>
<td>3 times daily for 7 months</td>
<td>400mg</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Buflomedial hydrochloride [21]</td>
<td>The mechanism is through vasodilation, mild anticoagulant properties, immune modulation, and antioxidant properties have been reported [1].</td>
<td>4 weeks</td>
<td>450 mg TID</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Xantinol nicotinate [22]</td>
<td>Peripheral vasodialator</td>
<td>4 months</td>
<td>Biweekly</td>
<td>Intralesional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Levamisole and vitamin A [23]</td>
<td>Immune modulation diminishes pro-fibrotic inflammation and enhances pro-fibrinolytic immune-mediated pathways [1].</td>
<td>4 days</td>
<td>150 mg of levamisole along with aqua sol caps 50000 iµ</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ENZYMES**

**PENETRATION ENHANCERS**

**VASODILATORS**

**IMMUNOMODULATORS**
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<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Immune milk [25]</td>
<td>It contains a highly active anti-inflammatory compound that suppressed the experimentally induced inflammation in animal models.</td>
<td>Twice a day for 3 months</td>
<td>45 gm</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Turmeric [26]</td>
<td>Anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, anti-cancer properties.</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>Turmeric Oil (600 mg TO mixed with 3 g Extracts of Turmeric/day)</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Lycopene [27]</td>
<td>Anticarcinogenic, antioxidant, highest physical quenching</td>
<td>2 months</td>
<td>16 mg</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Tea pigments and vitamins [28]</td>
<td>The main action is by eliminating the deficiency status and normalizes the cellular activity to prevent pathological mechanisms like carcinogenesis [1].</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>2 capsules Mangifera indica-94 mg, Withania somnifera-71 mg, Daucus carota-47 mg, Glycyrrhiza glabra-29 mg, Vitis vinifera-12 mg, Emblica officinalis-141 mg, Yashada bhasma-2.5 mg, oils of Triticum sativum 6.5 mg [29]</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Mangifera indica, Withania somnifera, Daucus carota, Glycyrrhiza glabra, Vitis vinifera, Emblica officinalis, Yashada bhasma, oils of Triticum sativum [22]</td>
<td>Herbal antioxidant formulation.</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>2 capsules Mangifera indica-94 mg, Withania somnifera-71 mg, Daucus carota-47 mg, Glycyrrhiza glabra-29 mg, Vitis vinifera-12 mg, Emblica officinalis-141 mg, Yashada bhasma-2.5 mg, oils of Triticum sativum 6.5 mg [29]</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Aloe vera [30]</td>
<td>Antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and immunomodulation</td>
<td>3 times daily for 3 months</td>
<td>5 mg gel</td>
<td>Topical</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE**

**OTHERS**

28. Gold, Iodine and Arsenopythoid [31] With the surgical cutting of bands, Large Internal doses and Injection respectively

29. Glucosidorum tripterygii totorum, vitamin A and E, nicotinic acid [32] The main action is by eliminating the deficiency status and normalizes the cellular activity to prevent pathological mechanisms like carcinogenesis [1].

30. Danxuan koukang, salvia miltiorrhiza [33] The mechanism is through vasodilation, mild anticoagulant properties, immune modulation, and antioxidant properties have been reported [1].
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Turmeric and black pepper [34]</td>
<td>Anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, anticarcinogenic, antifibrotic, immunomodulatory</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>Turmeric 400 mg Black pepper 100 mg</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 capsules TID</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Nigella sativa [34]</td>
<td>Anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, anticarcinogenic, antifibrotic, immunomodulatory</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>500 mg</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2 capsules TID</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Pentoxifylline and garlic pearls [36]</td>
<td>Garlic has immunomodulation, vasodilator, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and chemopreventive Pentoxifylline has antifibrinolytic, immunomodulation, anti-TNF effect, and hemorheological properties.</td>
<td>3 months</td>
<td>Pentoxifylline 400 mg and garlic pearls 0.25%</td>
<td>Oral</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Surgical management
5. Laser Management

2.1 Habit Counseling

The first and foremost treatment plan in OSMF is strict discontinuance of habit with motivation and intense counselling session for educating and creating awareness about the disease and its malignant potential [5].

2.2 Basic Regimen

The second line of approach for the management of OSMF is the nutritional supplementation like Vitamins and Iron. It has been observed in a study that majority of the OSMF patients has Vitamin B12 and Iron deficiency due to inability to eat [6].

2.3 Medical Management

The management of OSMF has significant challenges for treatment options. Even Though several options are available still an established treatment regimen is lacking. So such treatment options available are discussed in Table 1. The medical management strategies are categorized with following heading as steroids, nutritional supplements, biogenic stimulators, enzymes, penetration enhancers, vasodilators, immunomodulators, alternative medicine and others. Future therapies suggested are molecular targeted therapies, Imatinib, Pirfenidone, nintedanib, Clostridium histolyticum collagenases, Sintuzumab, Hyperbaric Oxygen therapy, and personalized Medicine [7].

2.4 Physiotherapy

Physiotherapy over the affected area to generate heat and mouth opening has been tried. A study in 2009 conducted on Fifty-four Nepali OSMF patients was managed for four months by randomly assigning them to 3 groups. The first group of patients in the physiotherapy group were asked to do jaw exercises five times a day in which tongue spatulas were placed passively between anterior teeth, spatula number determined by comfortable mouth opening. An extra spatula was added every fifth day, but the spatula was tried on the tenth day in case of pain. The patient was subjected to analgesics 30 minutes before exercise to reduce the pain. The second group was treated with local injection of steroids, and the third group received no active treatment. The patients subjected to physiotherapy improved mouth opening compared to the other two groups [37].

2.5 Surgical Treatment

This form of modality is usually suggested during the severe form of OSMF and when the other forms of modality are unsuccessful. The common method of excision is scalpel which is considered to be the preparatory step for surgical treatment. Different surgical procedures tried are intraoral (tongue, palate, buccal fat pad), extraoral (temporal fascia, nasolabial), distant flaps, grafts, muscle myotomies and oral stents etc. Further a systematic review stated that the choice of procedure depends on the operator. [38].

2.6 Laser

A systematic review by Gondivkar SM et al. from various databases found that studies with Laser were used for stage II and III OSMF patients. Even though different Laser types and parameters were considered, all studies showed improvement in mouth opening ranging between 6.84mm to 23.7mm. Further two studies showed improvement in tongue protrusion, check flexibility, and reduction in burning sensation [39].

3. CONCLUSION

The treatment of OSMF is still not satisfactory. Therefore, further clinical trials with newer modalities and combinations are required to manage this potentially malignant disorder and to prevent its malignant transformation.

CONSENT

It is not applicable.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

As per international standard or university standard ethical approval has been collected and preserved by the authors.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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