

SPOT DIAGNOSIS (IMAGE GALLERY)



TOOTH IN A NEWBORN

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A 5 day old male newborn presented to us with complaints of excessive crying and refusal to suck. Oral examination revealed a single crown of tooth in anterior mandibular region {figure 1}. It was whitish opaque in color and mobile. Systemic examination was normal. A pedodontist opinion was taken and X- ray done showed a tooth devoid of root portion with a normally developing tooth

germ below it. In view of feeding difficulty and mobility, the tooth was extracted by pedodontist under topical anesthesia.

What is tooth present at birth called?

Teeth present in mouth at birth are defined as natal teeth while those that erupt within 30 days of birth are neonatal teeth. It is a rare entity with a prevalence of about 1 in 2000 to 3500 live births. {1} Among the various types, 85 percent erupt as mandibular incisors, 11 percent as maxillary incisors, 3 percent as mandibular canines and 1 percent as maxillary canines or molars. {2} Etiology may include infection, trauma, malnutrition, hormonal stimulation and maternal exposure to environmental toxins. In view of complications such as feeding problems, irritation and trauma to infants tongue, sublingual ulceration {Riga-Fede disease} and risk of aspiration of mobile ones, {3} natal teeth are of prime importance not only for a dentist but a pediatrician as well. Since, pediatricians are the first to notice these, an early consultation and integrated management with a pediatric dental surgeon may help prevent complications.

References

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