Science World Publishing

Open Access Journal | Volume: 2.2

SCIENCE WORLD JOURNAL OF PEDIATRICS

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Clinical Insights on Neonatal Teeth: Case Analysis and Complications

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Article Information

Article Type: Clinical Image

Journal Type: Open Access

Volume:2 Issue: 2

Manuscript ID: SWJP-2-1125

Publisher: Science World Publishing

Recieved Date: 10 Nov 2024

Accepted Date: 09 Dec 2024

Published Date: 16 Dec 2024

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Citation:

Houda Bella (2024). Clinical Insights on Neonatal Teeth: Case Analysis and Complications. Sci World Journ of Pediatrics, 2(2);1-2

1. Clinical Image

A female newborn presented to the neonatology unit at Mohammed V Military Instruction Hospital in Rabat on day 7 of life due to the presence of a neonatal tooth. Clinical examination revealed a single tooth located at the mandibular incisor area, with significant mobility, which posed a potential risk for complications such as aspiration or oral injury. After careful evaluation, an extraction was performed under local anesthesia to prevent any risk of inhalation or traumatic ulceration.

Natal teeth, present at birth in some newborns, are a rare anomaly that primarily affects the lower incisors. Their origin remains poorly understood, though hereditary factors and a superficial position of the dental germ are often suggested as possible explanations.

Complications associated with natal teeth can include risks of inhalation or ingestion if the tooth is highly mobile, tongue ulcerations (Riga-Fede syndrome) that may interfere with feeding, and mucosal infections like candidiasis. In severe cases, there is an increased risk of dental caries and potential for serious infections, such as osteitis or generalized infections [1].

To determine whether a natal tooth should be retained or extracted, the practitioner must evaluate specific factors, including the tooth's mobility, presence of lesions, breastfeeding difficulties, and whether it is a supernumerary tooth. Although challenging to perform in newborns, radiography is essential for assessing root development and the position of the underlying dental germ. Treatment options include polishing sharp edges or using composite resins to smooth the tooth; however, these procedures present technical challenges and carry ingestion risks in neonates [2].

2. Keywords: Neonatal; Natal teeth

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