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Age-related Differences in Localization of Beta-defensin-2 in Human Gingival Epithelia

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Abstract: Defensins are known to play an important role in defense against bacteria. It is also known that immunity against infection is compromised with age. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the localization of human beta-defensin (HBD)-2 in human gingival epithelia according to age. Gingival epithelia in maxillary premolar buccal normal regions was immunohistochemically stained for HBD-2. Specimens were divided into two groups: 6 cases in a young group (<20 years old) and 7 cases in an elderly group (>50 years old). Expression of HBD-2 in gingival epithelium in young subjects was mostly detected in the superficial layer of the parakeratinized layer, while some areas of the spinous cell layer in elderly subjects were positive for HBD-2, as was the superficial layer. Two cases in the young group and 5 cases in the elderly group immunoreacted with HBD-2 in the spinous cell layer. Furthermore, immunoreaction was stronger in the elderly group. The results revealed HBD-2 positive cells in spinous cells in the elderly group and in the parakeratinized layer in the young group.

Key words: Beta-defensin-2, Gingival epithelium, Aging

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