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Long-term periodical isolation of *Staphylococcus aureus* and methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) from Japanese children's oral cavities

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Abstract INTRODUCTION: Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) is a major pathogen causing nosocomial infections. To control nosocomial infection in a dental hospital, periodical surveillance of MRSA from the oral cavity is very important. Furthermore, this surveillance might reveal any alteration of the incidence of MRSA among healthy children in a particular area, because many children having no systemic disease except for dental problems come to dental offices. METHODS: Totally 741 children were participated in the present study; 307 in 1987-88, 103 in 1992-93, 129 in 1997-98 and 202 in 2002-2003. *S.aureus* was isolated from the tongues of children without systemic diseases. All isolates were investigated for coagulase types and susceptibilities to five antibiotics. RESULTS: *S.aureus* was isolated from 33-44% of children during the examination period. The incidence of MRSA was maximal in 1992-93, and then constant at around 3%. MRSA that have type II or III coagulase were relatively dominant. CONCLUSION: Although outbreaks of MRSA in Japan was decreased in the early 90's, more than 3% of children without particular risks are considered positive for MRSA.

Key words Child, Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*, Oral cavity, Periodical isolation

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