

CLINICAL IMAGE

Squamous papilloma in the external auditory canal

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Abstract

Squamous papilloma is a benign neoplasm and most commonly occurs in the oral cavity or larynx but rarely in the external auditory canal. Human papilloma virus is thought to be the cause. The effective treatment is surgical excision.

KEYWORDS

ear, ear canal, external auditory canal, external ear, squamous papilloma

Squamous papilloma is a benign neoplasm in the head and neck region. It most commonly occurs in the oral cavity or larynx but only rarely in the external auditory canal (EAC). Human papilloma virus is thought to cause squamous papilloma in the EAC. The effective treatment is surgical excision.

A 39-year-old woman visited my otorhinolaryngology clinic due to a mass in the right EAC. Physical examination revealed a 0.5 × 0.3 cm papillomatous mass in the EAC inlet in the right auricle (Figure 1). The lesion was completely excised under local anesthesia. Squamous papilloma was diagnosed histopathologically.

Squamous papilloma is a benign neoplasm and most commonly occurs in the oral cavity or larynx but only rarely in the EAC. However, it has been commonly reported in southern China, probably due to cultural practices of aggressive ear cleansing with unsterilized instruments.^{1,2}

Human papilloma virus (HPV) low-risk subtypes 6 and 11 are thought to cause squamous papilloma in the EAC.^{1,2} Histopathologically, squamous papilloma forms finger-like projections of stratified squamous epithelium with central fibrovascular cores.²

The effective treatment is surgical excision. Alternatives include cryosurgery, electrodesiccation with or without curettage, and carbon dioxide laser.^{1,2} Recurrence is rare after complete excision.² However, it should be carefully followed up because malignant transformation has been reported.¹

What is the probable diagnosis based on this image? This image emphasizes that squamous papilloma can be observed in the EAC, which could be associated with HPV infection, and the effective treatment is surgical excision.

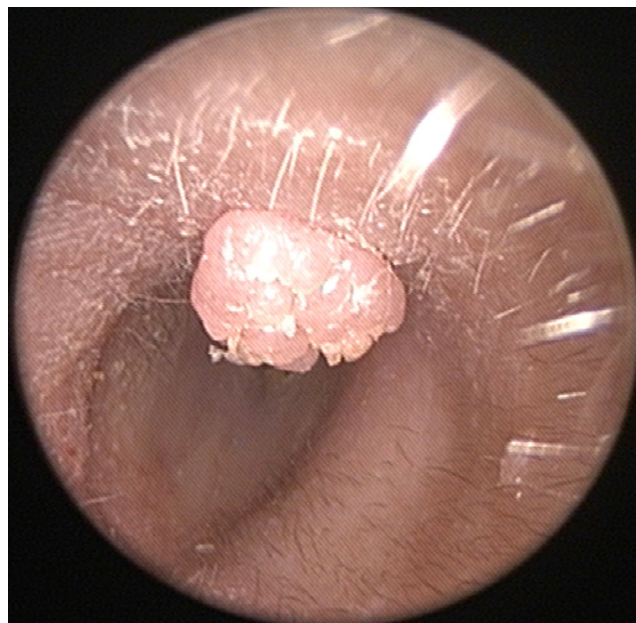


FIGURE 1 A 0.5 × 0.3 cm soft papillomatous mass in the inlet of the external auditory canal in the right auricle

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None declared.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

JJ: involved in conceptualization, data collection, literature review, analysis, investigation, writing—original draft, review, and editing.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

The Institutional Review Board of the National Health Insurance Service Ilsan Hospital exempted the review of this study (NHIMC 2020-11-006).

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