OPPORTUNISTIC INFECTIONS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO HIV - A REVIEW

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Abstract

Acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) is an infectious disease caused by the Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), and is characterized by profound immunosuppression that leads to opportunistic infections. Opportunistic infections are signs of a declining immune system and are the most common cause of death for people with AIDS. People with healthy immune systems can be exposed to certain viruses, bacteria, or parasites and have no reaction to them, because immune system of the body fights against these infections, but people infected with HIV can face serious health threats as their immune system is damaged. Such infections are said to be "opportunistic" because they take advantage of weakened immune system, and they can cause devastating illnesses. As these infections are dangerous and can be fatal it is essential to understand the signs, symptoms, prevention, and management of these infections.

Oral health is strongly associated with physical and mental health, the presence of oral lesions can have a significant impact on health related quality of life. Oral manifestations are earliest and most important indicators of infection with HIV. In this paper we have made an attempt to discuss various opportunistic infections of oral cavity as indicators of infection with HIV and progression of HIV disease to AIDS.