



UNIVERSIDADE ESTADUAL PAULISTA
"JÚLIO DE MESQUITA FILHO"

DISSERTAÇÃO DE MESTRADO

**EVALUATION OF p16^{Ink4a} EXPRESSION AND PRESENCE OF
HPV-16 DNA BY REAL TIME PCR IN PATIENTS WITH ORAL
LEUKOPLAKIA**

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**EVALUATION OF p16^{Ink4a} EXPRESSION AND PRESENCE OF HPV-16 DNA
BY REAL TIME PCR IN PATIENTS WITH ORAL LEUKOPLAKIA**

Dissertação apresentada à Faculdade de Odontologia de Araçatuba, Universidade Estadual Paulista “Júlio de Mesquita Filho” - UNESP, para obtenção do título de Mestre em Odontologia, área de Concentração em Estomatologia.

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Coorientador: Professor Titular Glauco Issamu Miyahara

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“Sempre há outra chance, uma outra amizade, um outro amor. Para todo fim, um recomeço.”

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

Biss SP. Avaliação da expressão da p16^{Ink4a} e a presença do DNA do HPV-16 pela *Real time* PCR em pacientes com leucoplasia bucal. [dissertação]. Araçatuba: Faculdade de Odontologia da Universidade Estadual Paulista; 2019.

Resumo

Objetivo: Avaliar a expressão do p16^{Ink4a} por imunohistoquímica e a presença do HPV-16 pela *Real time* PCR em tecido fresco, plasma e saliva de pacientes com leucoplasia bucal (LB) e hiperplasia fibrosa inflamatória (HFI). **Material e métodos:** Foram incluídos 67 pacientes com o diagnóstico de LB e 44 pacientes com diagnóstico de HFI no estudo. Foram coletados dados sociodemográficos, clinicopatológicos, amostras de tecido fresco, sangue e saliva, que foram armazenados em um freezer a -80°C para realização de análise molecular. Também foi utilizado o tecido parafinizado para realização da imunohistoquímica para a p16^{Ink4a}. As amostras de materiais biológicos obtidos dos pacientes foram submetidas à detecção do DNA do HPV-16 pela *Real time* PCR. O tecido parafinizado dos mesmos pacientes foram utilizados para avaliar a expressão da p16^{Ink4a} pela imunohistoquímica. **Resultados:** Dos 67 pacientes incluídos de LB no estudo, 55,2% eram do sexo masculino com uma média de idade de 57,1 anos. Os pacientes idosos (>45 anos) compuseram 86,6% da amostra. As localizações anatômicas mais acometidas por LB foram a mucosa jugal (35,8%) e língua (20,9%). Sobre o tabagismo, 71,8% dos pacientes eram fumantes, onde a maioria (47,8%) foi classificada como tabagista leve. Em relação ao consumo de álcool, 47,4% eram alcoolistas, sendo a sua maioria classificada como alcoolista leve (59,3%). O grupo HFI foi composto por 54,5% pacientes do sexo masculino com uma média de idade de 57,3 anos. 90,9% dos pacientes eram idosos (>45 anos). A ocorrência das lesões foram em mucosa jugal (31,8%) e rebordo alveolar (25%). A expressão para p16^{Ink4a} na LB foi fraca (41,8%) e para o grupo HFI, majoritariamente a expressão foi forte (68,2%). *Real time* PCR não detectou HPV-16 em nenhuma das amostras analisadas. **Conclusão:** Os achados em nosso estudo mostraram que a detecção de HPV de alto risco em tecido fresco, plasma e saliva para LB e HFI não se correlacionaram com a superexpressão da p16^{Ink4a}.

Palavras-chave: Imunohistoquímica, Leucoplasia, Papillomaviridae, Reação em cadeia da polimerase em tempo real.

Biss SP. Evaluation of p16^{Ink4a} expression and presence of HPV-16 DNA by *Real time* PCR in patients with oral leukoplakia. [dissertation] – Araçatuba: UNESP – São Paulo State University; 2019.

Abstract

Objective: To evaluate the expression of p16^{Ink4a} by immunohistochemistry and the presence of HPV-16 by *Real time* PCR in fresh tissue, blood plasma, and saliva of patients with oral leukoplakia (OL) and inflammatory fibrous hyperplasia (IFH). **Material and methods:** Sixty-seven patients with the diagnosis of OL and 44 patients with the diagnosis of IFH were included in the study. Sociodemographic, clinicopathological, fresh tissue, blood, and saliva samples were collected and stored at - 80°C for molecular analysis. Paraffinized-embedded tissue was also used to perform the immunohistochemistry for p16^{Ink4a}. Samples of biological material obtained from the patients were submitted to HPV-16 DNA detection by real time PCR, both with specific probes. Paraffinized-embedded tissue from the same patients were used to evaluate the expression of p16^{Ink4a} by immunohistochemistry. **Results:** Out of the 67 included OL patients, 55.2% were male with a mean age of 57.1 years. Elderly patients (> 45 years) comprised 86.6% of the sample. The prevalence of lesions was highest in the buccal mucosa (35.8%) followed by the mobile tongue (20.9%). 71.8% were smokers and the majority (47.8%) was classified as light smoker. Regarding alcohol consumption, 47.4% were alcoholics, most of whom were classified as light alcoholics (59.3%). The IFH group was composed of 54.5% of male patients with a mean age of 57.3 years. 90.9% of the sample were elderly patients (> 45 years). The highest occurrence of the lesions was in buccal mucosa (31.8%) and alveolar ridge (25%). The expression for p16^{Ink4a} in LB was mostly weak (41.8%) and for the IFH group, the expression was mostly strong (68.2%). There was no positivity in any of the samples for HPV-16 by real time PCR. **Conclusion:** Our findings showed the HR-HPV detection in fresh tissue, plasma blood and saliva for OL and IFH does not correlate with p16^{Ink4a} immunoexpression in paraffinized-embedded tissue.

Keywords: Immunohistochemistry, Leukoplakia, Papillomaviridae, Real-time polymerase chain reaction.

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LISTA DE ABREVIACÕES

DNA	=	Deoxyribonucleic acid
EDTA	=	Ethylenediamine tetraacetic acid
FFPE	=	Formalin-fixed, paraffin-embedded
HPV	=	Human Papillomavirus
HNSCC	=	Head and neck squamous cell carcinoma
IFH	=	Inflammatory fibrous hyperplasia
IHQ	=	Immunohistochemistry
IPC	=	Internal positive control
ISH	=	<i>in situ</i> hybridization
nPCR	=	Nested polymerase chain reaction
OPMD	=	Oral potentially malignant disorders
OL	=	Oral leukoplakia
OSCC	=	Oral squamous cell carcinoma
pRb	=	Retinoblastoma protein
qPCR	=	Quantitative polymerase chain reaction
SCC	=	Squamous cell carcinoma
UNESP	=	Universidade Estadual Paulista Júlio de Mesquita Filho

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Evaluation of p16^{Ink4a} expression and presence of HPV-16 DNA by *Real time* PCR in patients with oral leukoplakia*

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INTRODUCTION

Human papillomavirus (HPV) has been classically associated with the development of cervical cancer (1) and, more recently, with the onset of tumors arising in other mucosal sites (2). In oropharyngeal cancer, HPV has been demonstrated as a risk factor for its occurrence while in oral cancer this relationship remains unclear (3). HPV has an exclusively intraepithelial infectious cycle and infects both mucosal squamous epithelium and cutaneous squamous epithelium (4). Currently, over than 200 subtypes of HPV have been identified and they are grouped as high-risk (HR) and low-risk (LR) according to their oncogenic potential (5). HPV subtypes 16 and 18 are the most common HR subtypes (6-8). The association between HR-HPV and head and neck squamous cell carcinoma (HNSCC) is well established, mostly in oropharyngeal cancer (9, 10). Additionally, HPV+HNSCC seems to have better prognosis than HPV– HNSCC (11).

Oral leukoplakia is the most frequent oral potentially malignant disorder (OPMD) (12). The most affected sites by leukoplakia are the lateral tongue border and floor of the mouth (13). Leukoplakia has been observed mostly in middle-aged men, with an increasing prevalence in increasing age (14). The classic risk factors for development of OL are alcohol and tobacco (15). Interestingly, recent studies have been suggesting HPV as a possible risk factor for OL (16). HPV has been detected in samples of OL in variable indices. Saghravanian *et al.* (17) evaluated 20 samples of fresh tissue OL and in none of the samples HPV was found. On the other hand, we previously found HPV-16 detection in 68.75% of OL fresh tissue (22/32) (18). However, a recent study reported no association between OPMD and HPV (2). This reinforces the need of studies to aiming at establishing the relationship between OPMD and HPV.

The methods for the detection of HPV are also source of debate. Immunohistochemistry (IHC) for p16^{Ink4a} (CDKN2A) in paraffin-embedded (FFPE) tissues is the most widely used method, mainly in the lower anogenital tract. Indeed, p16^{Ink4a} expression is currently being explored as a prognostic marker in oropharyngeal SCC (19). Due to the absence of a consistent link between HPV infection and p16^{Ink4a} expression by IHC, this method is not specific for HPV detection. Therefore, using other techniques with higher specificity is essential to detect accurately the HPV and, potentially, draw some conclusions (20).

Data mentioned above show that the role of HPV in the onset of OPMD, namely OL, remains unknown. Besides studies using unspecific methods for the detection of HPV added to the high variation of techniques used to detect HPV limit the interpretation of their results. Therefore, the aim of this study is to evaluate the presence of HPV-16 in fresh tissue, plasma and saliva by *Real time* PCR, and correlate these findings with the immunohistochemical expression of p16^{Ink4a} from patients with OL.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study design and population

This cross-sectional study included 67 patients with the diagnosis of OL (case group) matched at age ± 3 years with 44 patients diagnosed with IFH (control group). A patient in the control group could be paired with more than one patient of the case group. The groups were selected at Oral Oncology Center, School of Dentistry, São Paulo State University (UNESP), Araçatuba, Brazil. The inclusion criteria were I. Patients with clinically and microscopically confirmed diagnosis of OL or IFH, II. Availability of fresh tissue, plasma, saliva and/or FFPE, III. patients who agreed to participate in the study. The exclusion criterion was patients who received previous treatment for OL or OSCC. This study was approved by the Research Ethics Committee in human studies (process number: FOA-01034/2011).

Data and material collection

Demographic and clinicopathological data such as age, sex, anatomical site, tobacco and alcohol consumption were collected from the medical records and summarized in a spreadsheet. Tobacco and alcohol consumption were graded as follows: abstinence, ex-smoker or ex-drinker, light use (up to 10 cigarettes and 1-2 drinks per day), moderate use (11-20 cigarettes and 3-4 drinks per day), and heavy use (more than 20 cigarettes and more than 4 drinks per day)(21). For diagnosis, an incisional biopsy was performed and the tissue was split into two fragments: the first one was fixed in 10% buffered formaldehyde for histopathologic processing and the second one was stored at -80°C for biomolecular analysis. For saliva collection, patients were instructed to do not ingest

liquids or eating 30 minutes before collection. Each patient spit in a sterile 15 mL centrifugation tube for 10 minutes to obtain at least 5 mL of saliva. The samples were centrifuged at 4°C, 3.000 rpm for 6 minutes. Subsequently it was stored at -80°C for future analysis. Blood samples were collected after saliva collection. Twenty milliliters of blood were obtained by venipuncture, placed in a tube containing ethylenediamine tetra-acetic acid (EDTA) and centrifuged immediately at 4°C, 1.500 rpm for 15 minutes. Plasma was collected and stored at -80°C for future analysis. FFPE was submitted to hematoxylin and eosin staining and immunohistochemistry for p16^{Ink4a} while fresh tissue, saliva and plasma were submitted to DNA extraction and *Real time* PCR for HPV-16.

DNA Extraction

DNA extraction was performed according to the QIAamp® mini kit DNA extraction kit manufacturer's instructions (QIAGEN, Hilden, Germany). The incubation time with the proteinase of the samples varied: 3 hours for tissues and 10 minutes for plasma/saliva at 56°C. The remaining steps were the same. DNA obtained from all samples were analyzed at 260/280nm by spectrophotometry and samples with confirmed DNA presence and integrity were stored at -20°C for posterior analysis.

Detection of HPV-16 by Real Time PCR

Real Time PCR technique was applied using the TaqMan® (Life Technologies®, Carlsbad, USA) in conjunction with the TaqMan® gene expression assays of HPV-16 and 18 (Life Technologies®, Carlsbad, USA) and Taqman® Master mix Universal (Life Technologies®, Carlsbad, USA) following the manufacturer's protocol. The reaction was performed in the standard time stipulated by the Step-One Plus equipment (Life

Technologies®, Carlsbad, USA). SiHa (cell line with HPV-16 integrated) was used as exogenous positive control.

p16^{Ink4a} Immunohistochemistry

Four-µm-thick tissue sections were deparaffinized and rehydrated. Antigen retrieval was conducted with citrate buffer at 55°C for 40 min. Endogenous peroxidase activity was blocked with 3% H₂O₂ for 15 min. Sections were incubated with anti-CDKN2A/p16^{Ink4a} antibody (Abcam, Cambridge, USA) at 1:2500 for 3h at room temperature. Host species-specific Nichirei's N-Histofine® Simple Stain MAX PO (MULTI) [Nichirei Biosciences inc., Tokyo, Japan] was used as the detection system. Color was revealed by diaminobenzidine (Spring Bioscience, Pleasanton, EUA) and Mayer's hematoxylin was used as counter stain. Cervical squamous cell carcinoma was used as positive control. Immunostaining was analyzed by two independent observers (GM and MC). Nuclear as well as cytoplasmic staining was considered positive. The distribution of p16^{Ink4a} positivity was evaluated by a semiquantitative score (22), as follows: 0: absent (<5% positive cells), 1: weak (5-25% positive cells) and 2: strong (>25% positive cells).

Statistical Analysis

All data were stored in a Microsoft Office Excel (Microsoft, Redmond, USA) spreadsheet and the statistical analyses were performed in GraphPad Prism 7 software (GraphPad Software, San Diego, USA). Normality was tested using the Shapiro-Wilk test. The Chi-square, Fisher exact, or Spearman's correlation tests were used to evaluate associations between groups and categorical variables (clinicopathological, sociodemographic and lifestyle). The results were presented in graphs and a p value of <0.05 was considered statistically significant.

RESULTS

Of the 67 patients diagnosed with OL (Figure 1) included in the study, 37 (55.2%) were male (Table 1). The mean age for men was 57.1 years and, for women, 60.5 years. Most of the patients were elderly (89.5%). The prevalence of OL was higher on buccal mucosa (35.8%) followed by tongue (20.8%). The majority of OL did not present epithelial dysplasia (73.1%). About lifestyle, most patients with OL were classified as current (71.8%) and light smokers (47.8%) smokers. Regarding the alcohol status, 47.4% of the patients were current drinkers and mostly were classified as light drinkers (59.3%, Table 1).

Most IFH (Figure 2) patients (54.5%) were male and 90.9% were elderly (Table 2). The prevalence of IFH was on buccal mucosa (31.8%) followed by alveolar ridge (25%). Mostly of the IFH samples presented low inflammatory infiltrate (52.3%).

p16^{Ink4a} expression was predominantly weak (41.8%) in OL (Figure 3) while most of IFH presented strong p16^{Ink4a} expression (68.2%, Figure 4).

DNA extraction from fresh tissue, saliva and plasma were performed in all 67 OL samples. For IFH, 23 fresh tissue, 20 saliva, and 16 plasma blood samples were available for the DNA extraction. HPV-16 DNA was not detected in any sample of OL and IFH (Tables 1-2 and Supplementary Figures 1-3).

Table 1. Sociodemographic, clinicopathologic and lifestyle data, p16^{Ink4a} and HPV-16 DNA detection results of patients with OL.

VARIABLES	N	%
Age	Mean: 57.1 (Male) 60.5 (Female)	
Gender		
Male	37	55.2%
Female	30	44.8%
Anatomic location		
Buccal mucosa	24	35.8%
Tongue	14	20.9%
Gingiva	11	16.4%
Mouth floor	5	7.4%
Labial mucosa	4	6%
Hard palate	4	6%
Lip	2	3%
Oropharynx	3	4.5%
Epithelial dysplasia		
Absent	49	73.2%
Mild	10	14.9%
Moderate	7	10.4%
Severe	1	1.5%
Tobacco smoking status*€		
Non-smoker	9	14.1%
Smoker	46	71.8%
Ex-smoker	9	14.1%
Tobacco smoking intensity		
Light	22	47.8%
Moderate	16	34.8%
Severe	8	17.4%
Alcohol drinking status*‡		
Non-drinker	17	29.8%
Drinker	27	47.4%
Ex-drinker	13	22.8%
Alcohol drinking intensity		
Light	16	59.3%
Moderate	9	33.3%
Severe	2	7.4%
p16 ^{Ink4a} Expression		
Absent	14	20.9%
Weak	28	41.8%
Strong	25	37.3%
Detection of HPV-16 DNA in fresh tissue		
Negative	67	100%
Positive	0	0%
Detection of HPV-16 DNA in saliva		
Negative	67	100%
Positive	0	0%
Detection of HPV-16 DNA in plasma		
Negative	67	100%
Positive	0	0%

*Excluding patients with missing data

Abbreviations: HPV, Human papillomavirus.

€ Smoking: each category equals (per day): Tobacco consumption were classified as: light (≤ 19 cigarettes/day), moderate (20-39 cigarettes/day) and severe (≥ 40 cigarettes/day).

‡ Alcoholism: each category equals (per day) as: light (0-2 drinks/day), moderate (3-4 drinks/day) and severe (> 5 drinks/day).

Table 2. Sociodemographic, clinicopathologic and lifestyle data, p16^{Ink4a} and HPV-16 DNA detection results of patients with IFH.

VARIABLES	N	%
Age	Mean: 57.3 (Male) 61 (Female)	
Gender		
Male	24	54.5%
Female	20	45.5%
Anatomic location		
Buccal mucosa	14	31.8%
Alveolar ridge	11	25%
Fornix	8	18.2%
Tongue	6	13.6%
Gingiva	2	4.5%
Lip	2	4.5%
Hard palate	1	2.3%
Inflammatory infiltrate		
Absent	5	11.4%
Mild	23	52.3%
Moderate	6	13.6%
Intense	10	22.7%
p16 ^{Ink4a} Expression		
Absent	8	18.2%
Weak	6	13.6%
Strong	30	68.2%
Detection of HPV-16 DNA in fresh tissue		
Negative	24	100%
Positive	0	0%
Detection of HPV-16 in FFPE		
Negative	20	100%
Positive	0	0%
Detection of HPV-16 in saliva		
Negative	20	100%
Positive	0	0%
Detection of HPV-16 DNA in plasma		
Negative	16	100%
Positive	0	0%

*Excluding patients with missing data

Abbreviations: HPV, Human papillomavirus.

€ Smoking: each category equals (per day): Tobacco consumption were classified as: light (≤ 19 cigarettes/day), moderate (20-39 cigarettes/day) and severe (≥ 40 cigarettes/day).

‡ Alcoholism: each category equals (per day) as: light (0-2 drinks/day), moderate (3-4 drinks/day) and severe (> 5 drinks/day).

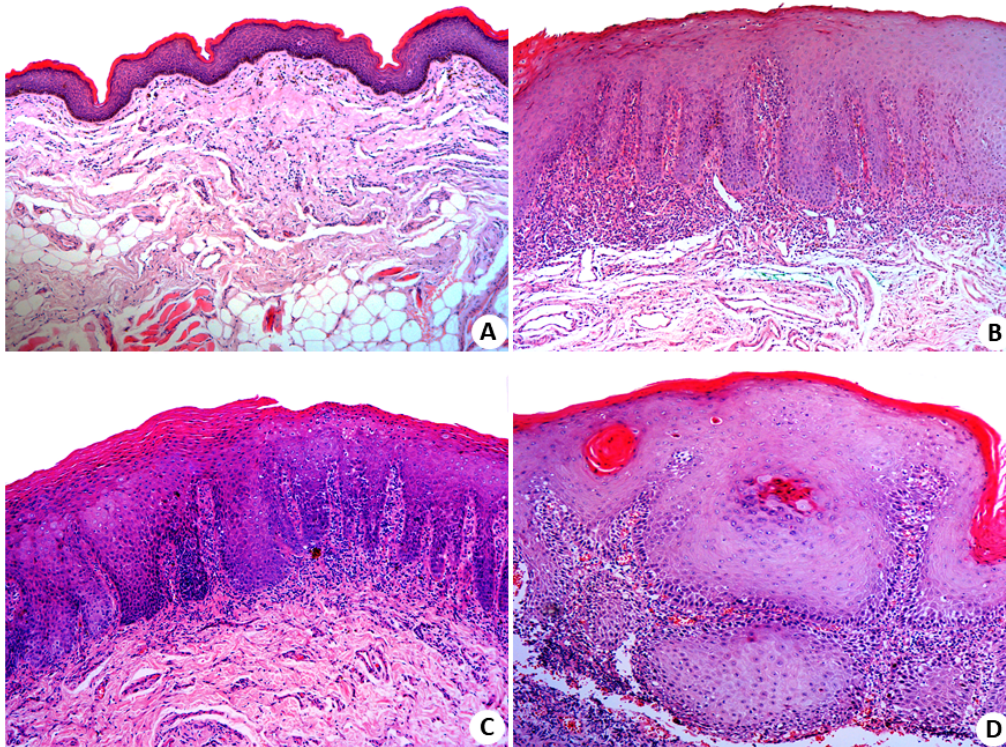


Figure 1. Oral leukoplakia A. absent, with B. mild, C. moderate, and D. severe epithelial dysplasia (H&E, 200X).

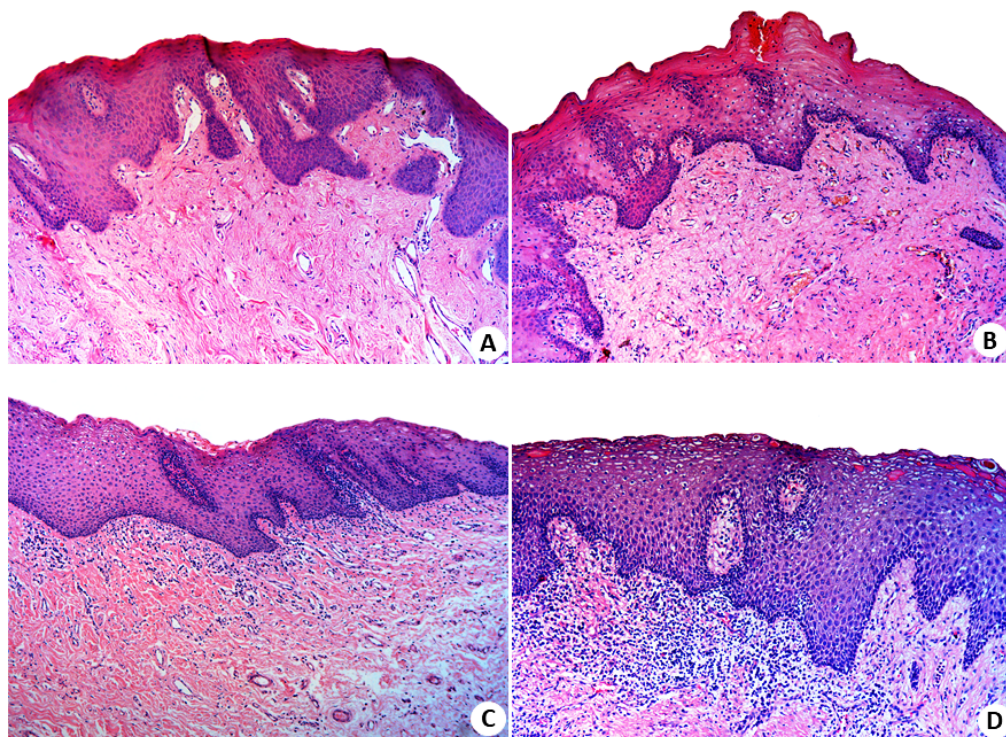


Figure 2. Inflammatory fibrous hyperplasia presenting A. absent, B. mild, C. moderate, and D. intense inflammatory infiltrate (H&E, 200X).

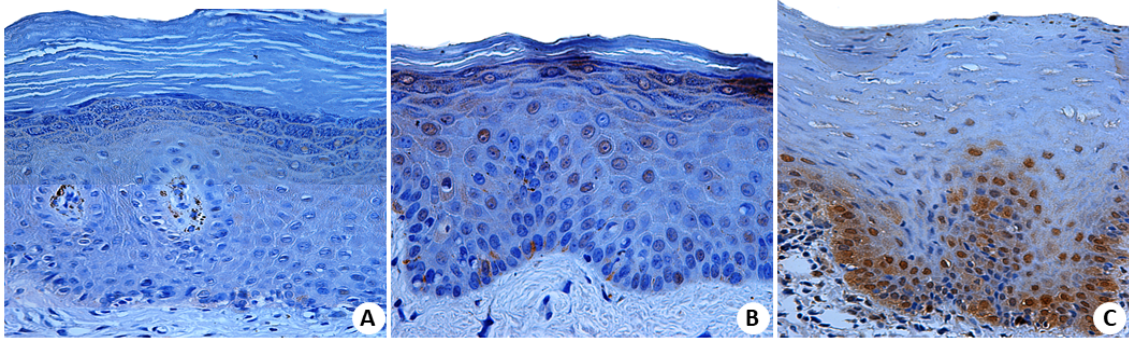


Figure 3. Oral leukoplakia presenting A. absent, B. weak, and C. strong immunostaining for p16^{Ink4a} (IHQ, 200X).

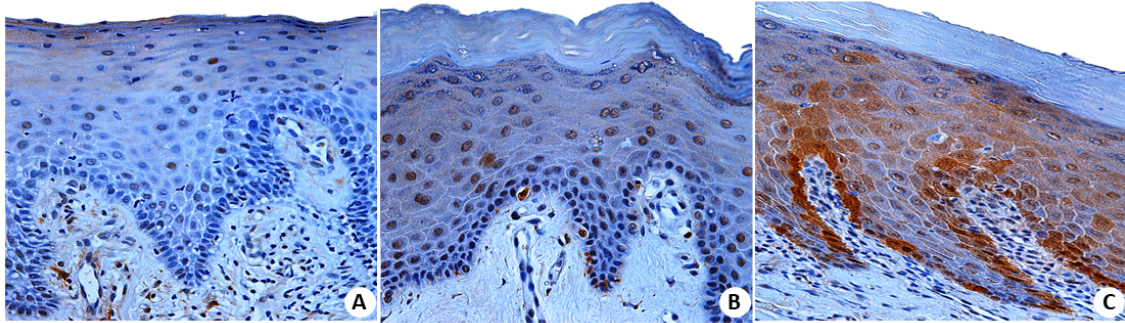


Figure 4. Inflammatory fibrous hyperplasia presenting A. absent, B. weak, and C. strong immunostaining for p16^{Ink4a} (IHQ, 200X).

Most OLs were positive for p16^{Ink4a} (Figure 5). However, the intensity of the immunostaining proportionally increased in OLs with moderate epithelial dysplasia when compared to lesions with absent or mild epithelial dysplasia. The low number of OL with severe dysplasia impaired further analysis. Epithelial dysplasia in OL was not statistically correlated with p16^{Ink4a} intensity ($p>0.05$).

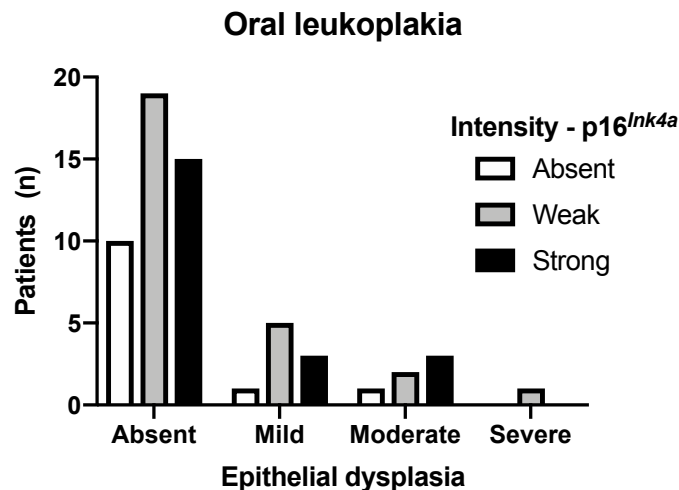


Figure 5. Correlation between epithelial dysplasia and p16^{Ink4a} expression in oral leukoplakia. Spearman's correlation test ($p=0.569$, $r=0.075$).

p16^{Ink4a} expression was observed in most (68.1%) of the IFHs regardless the presence of inflammatory infiltrate ($p=0.547$, $r=0.093$, Figure 6).

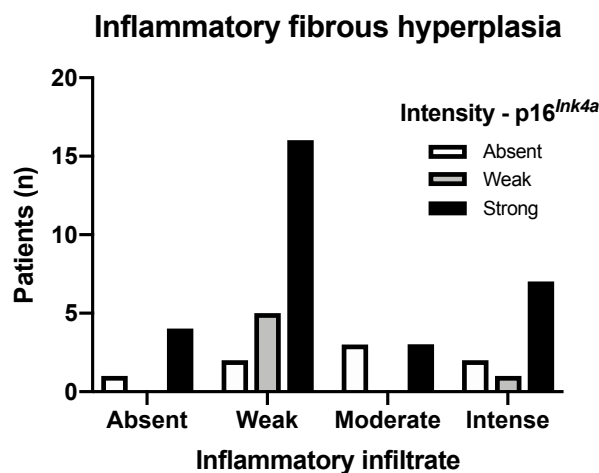


Figure 6. Correlation between the inflammatory infiltrate intensity and p16^{Ink4a} expression in inflammatory fibrous hyperplasia. Spearman's correlation test ($p=0.547$, $r=-0.093$).

Figure 7 shows an inverse correlation of p16^{Ink4a} expression if OL and IFH (p=0.001, r=-0.466). While OL patients presented predominantly weak staining for the marker, most IFH patients exhibited strong expression of p16^{Ink4a}.

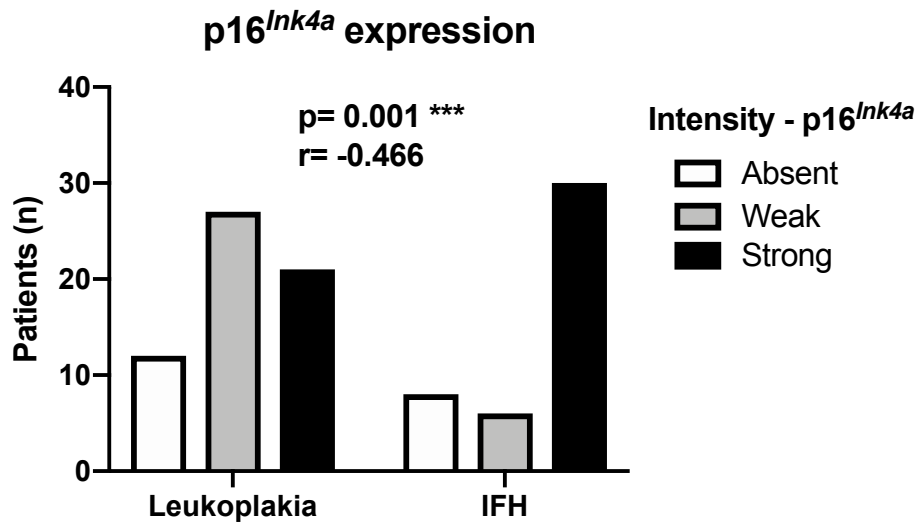


Figure 7. Correlation between the p16^{Ink4a} expression in oral leukoplakia and inflammatory fibrous hyperplasia. Spearman's correlation test.

DISCUSSION

Oral leukoplakia is the most frequent oral potentially malignant disorder with a transformation rate ranging from 0.13 to 34% (23). Besides the classic risk factors associated to the malignant progression of OL, HPV has been suggested to participate in this process. In this study, we found *null* prevalence of HPV-16 in the 67 samples of OL and 20 samples of inflammatory fibrous hyperplasia (IFH) analyzed by real time PCR. Some investigations corroborate our results (2, 17, 24) while others do not (18, 25). The prevalence of HPV in OL is variable and ranges from 0% to 68.7% (18, 26). Thus, the association between HPV and OL is still controversial. It is questionable if HPV can be considered as an etiological or a malignancy risk factor in OPMD or malignant lesions (27). In this context, some research groups identified HR-HPV antigens and viral DNA in OPMD and malignant oral disorders (28).

Immunohistochemistry of p16^{Ink4a} has been routinely employed to detect the presence of HPV-16 in different kinds of neoplasias (29). Since there is a connection between p16^{Ink4a} overexpression and HPV-16 positivity, we also analyzed p16^{Ink4a} expression in OL and IFH. Interestingly, 53/67 OL and 36/44 IFH were positive for p16^{Ink4a}.

A fact that may be associated with HPV negativity in OL is association between age (24). In our study, the mean was greater than 55 years (25-82 years). Studies have shown that the prevalence of HPV infection occurs in younger patients (28, 30).

Bhosale *et al.* (31) evaluated the presence of HR-HPV by nPCR and expression of p16^{Ink4a} in leukoplakia samples and found a null prevalence in both analyses. These results match with qPCR results, but not with IHC. But another study, observed a null prevalence of HR-HPV, with low p16^{Ink4a} overexpression (13/74) (24). A hypothesis is that p16^{Ink4a} is involved with the cell cycle and apoptosis (32). In several tumors it can

have its loss or downexpressed to overexpression (33). The major function of p16^{Ink4a} is inhibit cell cycle (phase G0 to S), trying to protect this cell from any type of stress: oxidative stress, contact with drugs (early senescence), inflammation and DNA damage. p16^{Ink4a} overexpression should not directly associated with the presence of HPV (34, 35). Suggested with its location at 9p21 where occurs loss of heterozygosity, defined as allelic loss in a heterozygous locus for a given marker, is known to be related with allelic loss of various tumor suppressor gene in our case, p16^{Ink4a} (36). Such possibility is corroborated by our findings in IFH. IFH is a chronic condition that is associated to long duration trauma (37). It is interesting to observe that the epithelium constantly exposed to a physical injury presented a high expression of p16^{Ink4a}, indicating this marker may have a role in the defense mechanisms triggered.

Although several studies document the association of HPV infection with OL, if HPV infection can promote malignant progression of OL, it is still unclear (38). Also, overexpression for p16^{Ink4a} is not limited to HPV positive lesions and therefore is not a reliable marker for the presence of HPV (24, 39).

There are different sources of biological samples that are used to detect HPV: fresh tissue, FFPE tissue and exfoliated cells (40). The gold-standard biological material for HPV detection is fresh tissue but its limited availability due to its need for diagnostic and histological grading is an important (41). Thus, other sources of biological material have been investigated, such as saliva and plasma (42). A recent study by Qureishi *et al.* (43) found 72.2% sensitivity and 90% specificity for HPV detection in saliva by PCR when compared to IHC for p16 and HPV DNA in situ hybridization in oropharyngeal cancer. These results suggest the potential of a non-invasive method to detect HPV without surgical intervention.

For HPV detection, there is a variety of methods to detection (44). Abreu *et al.* (45) showed in a review molecular-biology techniques for HPV detection. From lowest to highest sensitivity and accuracy are: Nucleic acids hybridization assays (Southern blot, *In situ* hybridization and Dot blot hybridization); signal amplification assays and nucleic acids amplification assays (Microarray, Conventional PCR, *Real time* PCR, Linear Array). Benefits using this technique are the high sensitivity as nucleic acids can be detected in very small concentrations, very reproducible and less false-positives results (46).

Farah *et al.* (47) related malignant transformation in lesions with epithelial dysplasia in 13.6% to 36.4% of the cases. In our study, 75% of the patients did not present epithelial dysplasia, and just one patient presented severe epithelial dysplasia. But we cannot correlate with the presence of HR-HPV with a weak p16^{Ink4a} expression. And in our study, did not showed a tendency of the major degree of dysplasia, the higher expression of p16^{Ink4a} (Figure 1). But another study observed an association between the major degree of dysplasia, the higher is p16^{Ink4a} expression (48).

In this study, we compared the presence of HR-HPV and p^{16Ink4a} expression with another lesion, which is not potentially malignant and not associated with the presence of HR-HPV and is the first study who reported HR-HPV detection in fresh tissue, plasma blood and saliva in OL and IFH, and comparing with FFPE for p16^{Ink4a} IHC.

The findings in our study showed the HR-HPV was not identified in fresh tissue, plasma blood and saliva for OL and IFH. And the lack of presence of HR-HPV does not correlate with p16^{Ink4a} immunoexpression in FFPE in both groups. Further studies are necessary to investigate the association between HR-HPV negativity and p16^{Ink4a} overexpression.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare no potential conflict of interest regarding this work.

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Anexo A

Parecer consubstanciado do CEP- FOA/UNESP



UNIVERSIDADE ESTADUAL PAULISTA
"JULIO DE MESQUITA FILHO"
Campus de Aracatuba

COMITÊ DE ÉTICA EM PESQUISA

CERTIFICADO

Certificamos que o Projeto "*Detecção do HPV por nPCR em leucoplasias bucais: Estudo caso-controle*", sob a responsabilidade do Pesquisador GLAUCO ISSAMU MIYAHARA, está de acordo com os Princípios Éticos em Pesquisa e foi aprovado em 27/05/2011, de acordo com o Processo FOA-01034/2011.

Aracatuba, 06 de junho de 2011.

ALESSANDRA MARCONDES ARANEGA
Vice-Coordenadora do CEP

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Anexo B

Periódico de interesse para submissão

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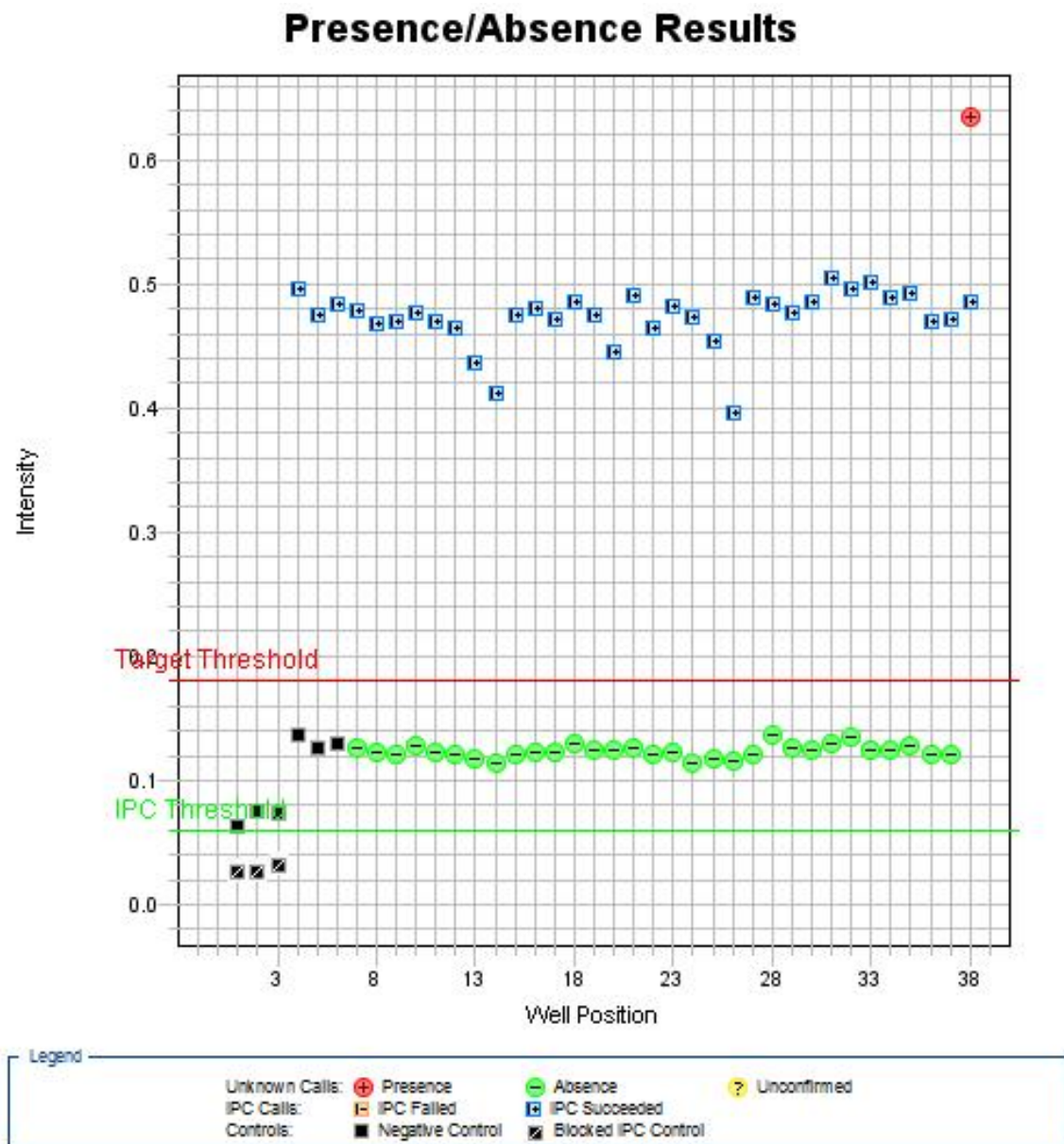
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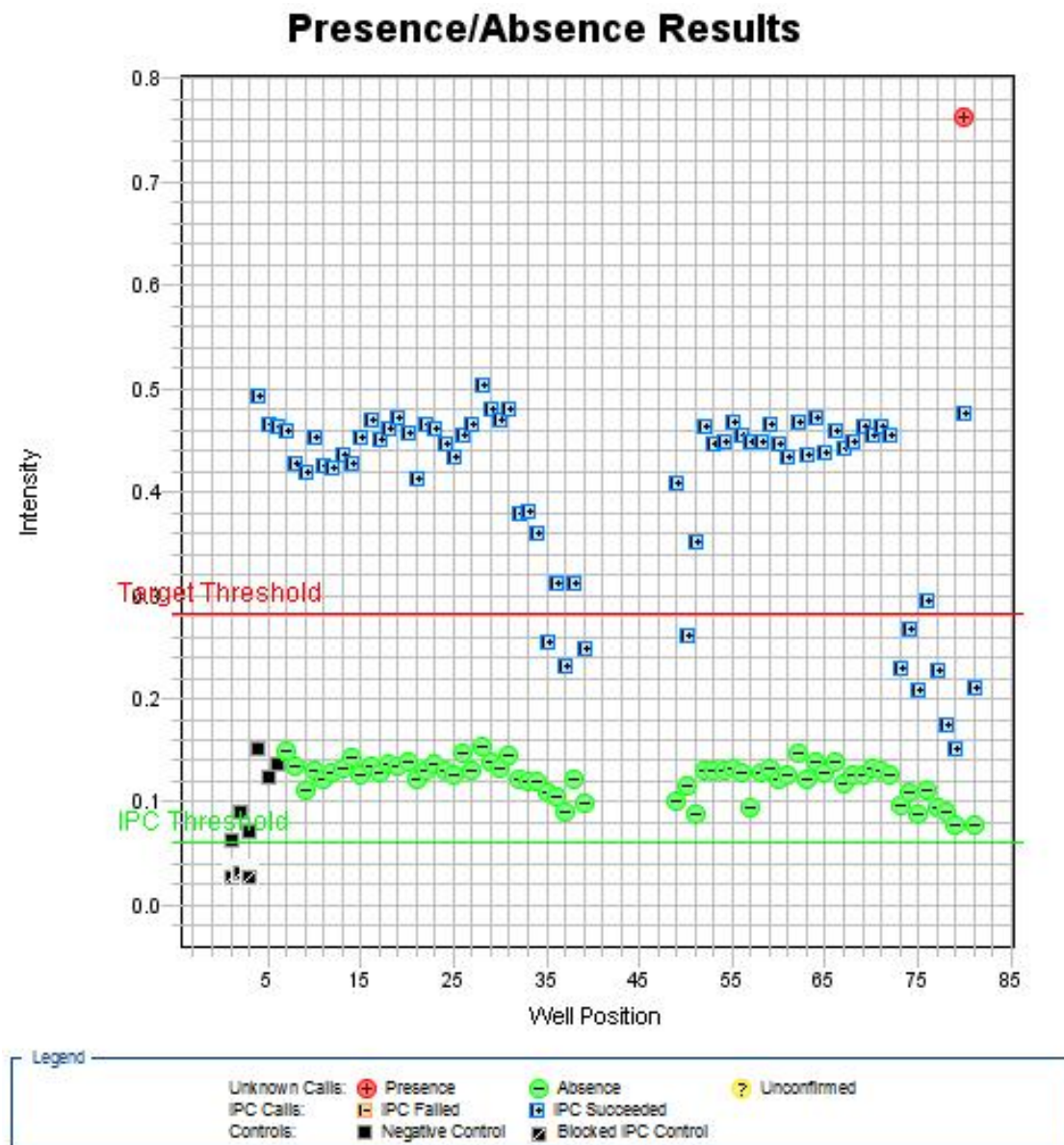
Qualis CAPES: A2

Anexo C

Gráficos dos ensaios de presença e ausência para o DNA do HPV-16 pela *Real time* PCR

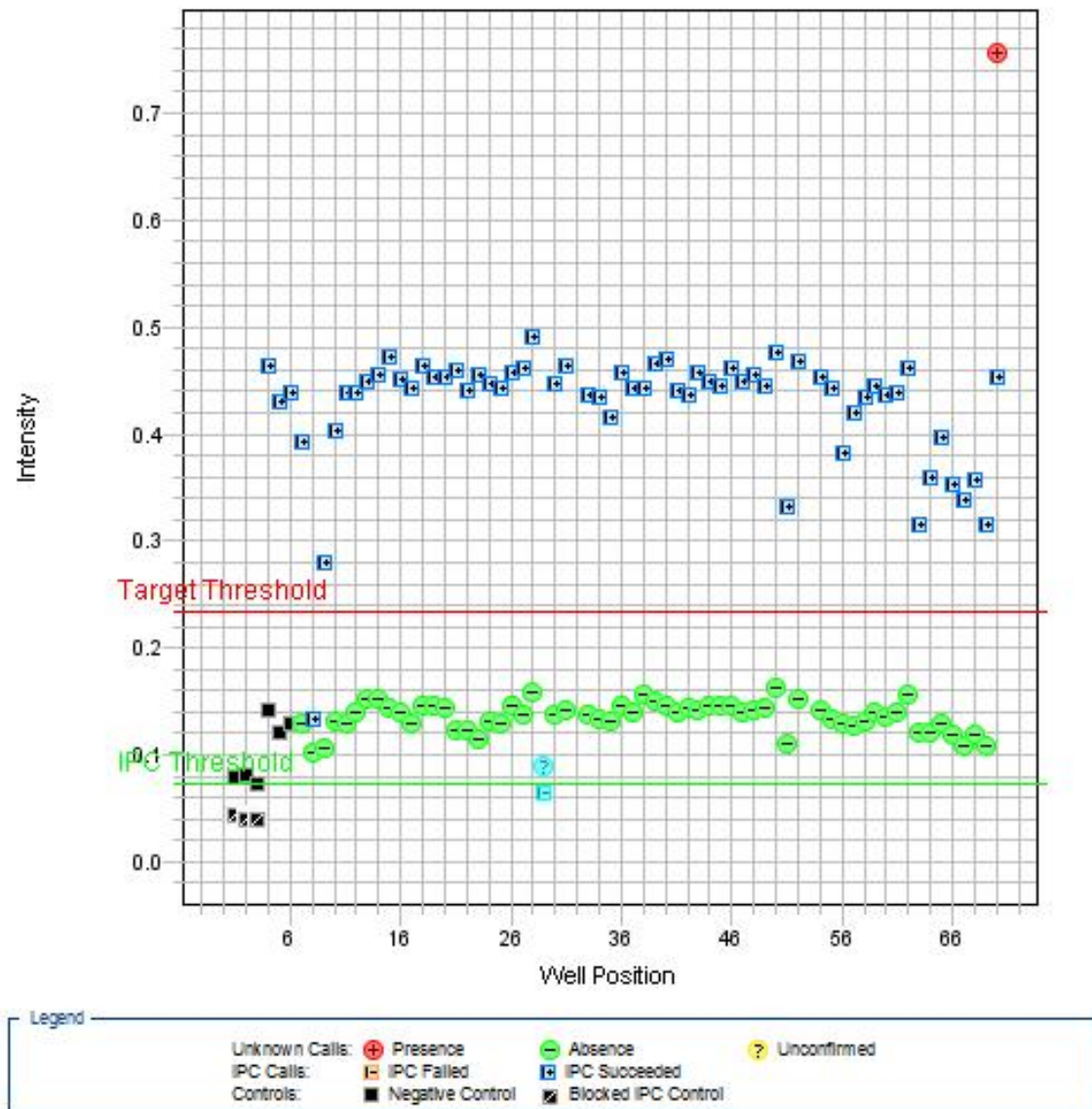


Supplementary Figure 1. Qualitative *Real Time* PCR results in fresh tissue of patients with OL. Positive control (red) SiHa cell line sample, absence of viral DNA (green), positive internal control (IPC) for each sample (blue) and negative control (black).



Supplementary Figure 2. Qualitative *Real Time* PCR results in saliva and plasma blood of patients with OL. Positive control (red) SiHa cell line sample, absence of viral DNA (green), positive internal control (IPC) for each sample (blue) and negative control (black).

Presence/Absence Results



Supplementary Figure 3. Qualitative *Real Time* PCR results in fresh tissue, FFPE, saliva and plasma of patients with IFH. Positive control (red) SiHa cell line sample, absence of viral DNA (green), positive internal control (IPC) for each sample (blue) and negative control (black).