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### Association between oral lichen planus and Epstein-Barr virus in Iranian patients

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**Introduction:** Oral lichen planus (OLP) is a common mucocutaneous disease with malignant transformation potential. Several etiologies such as humoral, autoimmunity, and viral infections might play a role, but still there is no definite etiology for this disease.

**Aim:** The aim of this study was to investigate the presence of Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) genome in Iranian patients with OLP as compared to people with normal mucosa.

**Materials & Methods:** The study was carried out on a case group including 38 tissue specimens of patients with histopathological confirmation of OLP and a control group including 38 samples of healthy mucosa. All samples were examined by nested polymerase chain reaction (PCR) method to determine the DNA of EBV.

**Results:** Twenty-two (57.9%) female samples and 16 (42.1%) male samples with OLP were randomly selected as the case group and 20 (52.6%) female samples and 18 (47.4%) male samples with healthy mucosa as the control group. There was a statistically significant difference in the percentage of EBV positivity between the case (15.8%) and the control groups ( $P < 0.05$ ); in the case group, three female samples (13.6%) and three male samples (18.8%) were infected with EBV; the difference between the genders was not statistically significant ( $P = 0.50$ ).

**Conclusion:** Results emphasized that EBV genome was significantly higher among Iranian patients with OLP so antiviral therapy might be helpful.