

An Analysis of 1000 Cases of Cleft Lip and Palate in Turkey

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Between the years 1955-65, 1000 patients with a facial cleft were presented to us for treatment. An analysis of this group of patients is presented in the following paragraphs and tables.

The distribution according to sex is shown in Table 1. It is generally

TABLE 1. Distribution for sex and cleft type for 1000 patients in Turkey, 1955-1965.

<i>type of cleft</i>	<i>female</i>	<i>male</i>	<i>total</i>
lip only.....	90	320	410
palate only.....	55	200	255
lip and palate.....	80	255	335

TABLE 2. Distribution of cleft type according to extent.

lip only	left	270
	right	80
	bilateral	30
lip and alveolar process	left	20
	right	8
	bilateral	2
palate only	hard and soft palate	105
	soft palate only	150
lip and palate	unilateral	200
	bilateral	85
	bilateral lip and alveolar process	50

accepted that cleft palate is more common in the female. Our figures do not reflect this opinion due to the fact that our Clinic is equipped to treat 30 males and only four females at one time. Furthermore, the villagers in

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Turkey frequently hide this malformation and fail to seek medical aid. Females are in a better position to conceal the defect.

Morphology is shown in Table 2. Birth order is reported in Table 3. Generally, more children with clefts are first-born than any other birth order. However, the figures do not reveal how many of these families had multiple births.

Presented in Table 4 are data regarding maternal age which suggest that facial clefts are more commonly associated with a maternal age of 20 to 30 years. It may be, however, that the major child-bearing period is between 20 and 30 years of age.

Presented in Table 5 are data regarding age of surgery. We recommend a lip repair at three months of age and a palate repair at two years. In spite of this, many patients present themselves for surgery rather late in life. It is a common belief in Turkey that cleft palate is caused by syphilis.

TABLE 3. Birth order of cleft lip and palate babies.

<i>birth order</i>	<i>lip only</i>	<i>palate only</i>	<i>lip and palate</i>
first.....	170	75	150
second.....	70	50	65
third.....	50	75	75
fourth.....	65	40	25
fifth.....	25	30	10
sixth.....	18	7	

TABLE 4. Maternal age.

<i>maternal age</i>	<i>number of clefts</i>
15-20 years.....	290
20-30 years.....	550
30-40 years.....	150
40-50 years.....	10

TABLE 5. Age of surgery.

<i>year of age</i>	<i>patients</i>
0-1.....	100
1-5.....	190
5-20.....	360
20-plus.....	350

Because of this, patients seek a palate repair even late in life and will not accept a speech aid prosthesis.

A review of the pedigree of these 1000 patients suggests that only 96 had a hereditary background. This represents a 9.6 percentage, whereas many authors feel that heredity is significantly higher. The mortality rate among patients with malformations tends to be comparatively high in our villages because of a lack of proper understanding and care.

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