

**Keratinization of Alveolar Mucosal Epithelium upon Contact with Gingival Connective Tissue**

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**Abstract.** Denuded root surfaces in a female patient with one maxillary cuspid and one premolar tooth were covered with a coronally positioned flap including non-keratinized alveolar mucosa. Before the operation, the teeth showed a 3-4 mm deep and a 3-4 mm wide recession defect with a 3-mm zone of keratinized gingiva. Coronal displacement of the alveolar mucosa on the bed of collagenous gingival connective tissue resulted in the development of keratinized epithelium, visible both clinically and histologically. Mechanical and microenvironmental stimuli may be the factors involved in the modulation of epithelial behavior.

**Key words:** epithelium; gingiva; gingival recession; keratin; mucous membrane