

TITLE: *CANDIDA* SPP AS PART OF THE ORAL MICROBIOTA OF HEALTHY, NATURAL INDIVIDUALS OF THE AFRICAN CONTINENT

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ABSTRACT:

The genus *Candida* encompasses about 150 species present in the oral cavity of healthy individuals, being considered an opportunistic pathogen that eventually causes infectious pictures, such as oral candidiasis. The diagnosis of the species involved is necessary for the choice of adequate antifungals and epidemiological control. There are a few studies on the identification of *Candida spp.* as part of the microbiota of healthy and diseased individuals from African countries, as well as of the infectious conditions caused by these fungi on the continent, especially oral pathologies. In view the above, the objective of this study was the isolation and identification of *Candida* species from the oral microbiota of healthy individuals from countries of the African continent, recently admitted in Brazil. The collection, through the use of swabs, passed on the back of the tongue, was performed in 45 individuals, coming from Guinea Bissau, Angola, Mozambique and Sao Tome and Principe, until 7 days after arrival in Brazil. For the isolation of the species, the collected material was sent to the Laboratory of Microbiology of UNILAB, where it was seeded in Petri dishes containing Sabouraud agar. The readings were daily up 15 days, where, with growth of colonies with macromorphology suggestive of *Candida spp.*, Gram staining and species identification were performed using the CHROMagar *Candida*® culture medium. Of the 45 samples collected, 10 were positive for the growth of *Candida spp.* The species found were: *Candida albicans* (n = 7), six were isolated from individuals from Guinea Bissau and one from Angola; *Candida krusei* (n = 2), identified in Guinea Bissau

individuals and *Candida sp.* (n = 1), from individuals from Mozambique. The *C. albicans* species was also the most isolated in a study carried out in a hospital in South Africa, corresponding to 45.4% of clinical samples analyzed. It's worth noting that this species has already been associated with oral pathologies, such caries and oral candidiasis. Thus, it's concluded that species of the genus *Candida*, especially *C. albicans*, make up the oral microbiota of natural individuals from African countries, being able to be involved in pathological processes whose treatment is necessary. However, more studies should be performed, with a greater number of participants, to evaluate the pathogenicity characteristics of the same.

Keywords: *Candida*, Microbiota, África