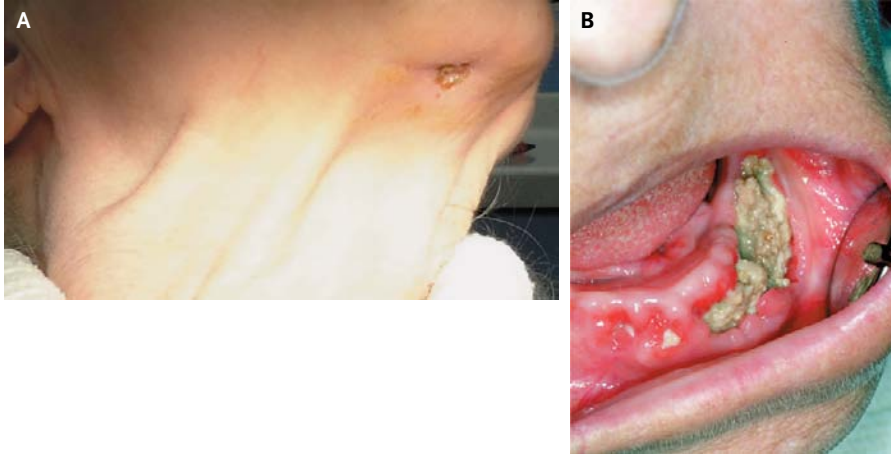


IMAGES IN CLINICAL MEDICINE

Halitosis and Sensory Loss



A 70-YEAR-OLD WOMAN REPORTED ORAL MALODOR AND LEFT MANDIBULAR pain accompanied by numbness on the left side of the lower lip. She had been receiving alendronate therapy for more than 2 years. Examination revealed halitosis, hypoesthesia of the left lower lip, and a submental discharging sinus (Panel A). Oral examination showed chronic osteonecrosis of the left mandible (Panel B). Treatment with a combination of antimicrobial agents and surgical débridement was eventually successful. Pathological examination of a surgical specimen confirmed necrotic bone. Osteomyelitis is uncommon in the jaw; however, bone disorders (e.g., osteopetrosis), infarction (of the type that can occur in sickle cell disease), or immune defects may predispose to jaw osteomyelitis. Osteonecrosis of the jaw has been described in association with bisphosphonate therapy or herpes zoster and is seen especially in patients undergoing cancer therapy.

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