Identification by means of the teeth.

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Studies on the progress of third-molar mineralisation in a Black African population.

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The forensic determination of the age of living people has become increasingly important in recent years. With regard to the relevant age group, the radiographic assessment of third-molar mineralisation is of particular importance. So far, the influence of geographic origin on the mineralisation rate has been insufficiently analysed.

The paper is based on a total of 595 conventional orthopantomograms of 474 male and 121 female Black Africans aged between 10 and 26 years for whom dates of birth were known. The mineralisation status of third molars was evaluated based on Demirjian's classification of stages (Demirjian et al., 1973. A new system of dental age assessment. Hum. Biol. 45, 221-227). This study presents the means and standard deviations, median values and the lower and upper quartiles separately for both sexes for the mineralisation stages D-H. Statistically significant differences between the upper and lower jaws were observed in males examined with regard to their attaining the stage F. Mandibular teeth developed 0.8 years earlier than maxillary teeth. Significant sex-specific differences were found with regard to the age at which tooth 38 reached the stage G. In females, tooth 38 reached stage G 1.5 years earlier than in males. In comparison to White probands, the Black African sample showed a tendency to achieve the mineralisation stages earlier. We would recommend using population-specific standards for age determination purposes.

English.

2006.