Journal of Neonatal Surgery
ISSN(Online): 2226-0439
Vol. 14, Issue 14s (2025)
https://www.jneonatalsurg.com

OPEN ACCESS

Classification of Oral lichen Planus Using Random Forest Ensemble Technique

Dr. S. Pandikumar[1], Dr. G. Rajkumar[*2], Dr.R.A. Vinoth Kumar[3], J Albert Irudaya Raj[4], Dr. R. Kadher Farook[5], Dr.B.N. Bobinath[6]

[1]Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Applications, Yadava College, Madurai, TN, India

Email ID: pandikmr1986@gmail.com

[2*] Head & Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Applications, N.M.S.S.Vellaichamy Nadar College, Madurai, TN, India

Email ID: mdugrk@gmail.com

[3]Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Science & Applications, Arul Anandar College, Madurai, TN, India

Email ID: vinothkumar@aactni.edu.in

[4] Assistant Professor & Head, Department of Information Technology, Arul Anandar College, Madurai, TN, India

Email ID: albert@aactni.edu.in

[5] Assistant Professor, Department of Information Technology, Arul Anandar College, Madurai, TN, India

Email ID: kadherfarook@aactni.edu.in

[6] Assistant Professor, Department of Computer Science, NPR Arts & Science College, Madurai, TN,India

Email ID: bnbobinath@gmail.com

***Corresponding Author**

Dr. G. Rajkumar

Cite this paper as: Dr. S. Pandikumar, Dr. G. Rajkumar, Dr.R.A. Vinoth Kumar, J Albert Irudaya Raj, Dr. R. Kadher Farook, Dr.B.N. Bobinath, (2025) Classification of Oral lichen Planus Using Random Forest Ensemble Technique. *Journal of Neonatal Surgery*, 14 (14s), 424-432.

ABSTRACT

Oral Lichen Planus (OLP) is a long-lasting inflammatory disorder disturbing the mucous membranes, with potential to escalate the risk of oral cancer if undiagnosed or mismanaged. Accurate and timely diagnosis is essential for effective treatment and management. This study compares the performance of three machine learning classifiers—Decision Tree, k-Nearest Neighbors (k-NN), and Random Forest—in detecting OLP based on MRI image data. A dataset of 50 MRI images was analyzed, with each classifier calculated using metrics such as accuracy, precision, recall, and F1 score. Outcomes indicate that the Random Forest classifier achieved the highest accuracy (90%), precision (92%), and recall (88%), outperforming the Decision Tree and k-NN classifiers, which yielded accuracies of 84% and 78%, respectively. While the Decision Tree demonstrated reasonable balance between precision and recall, k-NN showed lower sensitivity in detecting true OLP cases. These findings suggest that ensemble methods like Random Forest may offer superior diagnostic accuracy for OLP detection, underscoring the potential for machine learning to enhance clinical decision-making in oral health.

Keywords: *KNN, Random Forest, Decision tree, OLP, GLCM..*

1. INTRODUCTION

Oral lichen planus is a prolonged provocative condition that disturbs the mucous membranes inside your mouth. It can cause a variety of symptoms, including white patches or lacy threads on the inside of your cheeks, or bright red patches in some areas. While oral lichen planus is not dangerous, it can be uncomfortable and may require medication to manage symptoms. Oral cancer is one of the most mutual distortions universal, with a yearly incident rate of 4.0 per 100,000 and a worldwide mortality rate of 2.7 per 100,000. It's a serious disease that can be dangerous if not diagnosed and cured initially.[1] Oral lichen planus (OLP), on the other hand, is a chronic inflammatory disease of immune origin that can increase the risk of developing oral cancer. In fact, OLP is currently classified as an oral potentially malignant disorder (OPMD), with a risk of malignant transformation ranging from 0.5% to 5%.[2] Research has revealed that OLP can be associated with other autoimmune infections, such as myasthenia gravis, alopecia areata, vitiligo, and ulcerative colitis. Certain patients with OLP may also have a greater risk of developing lymphatic metastasis and relapse.[3]

The etiopathogenesis of OLP is not yet fully agreed, but factors such as stress, genetic background, certain dental materials, and several drugs may contribute to its development. Regular follow-up and monitoring of patients with OLP are crucial to facilitate early diagnosis and treatment of oral cancer.[4] Studies have also highlighted the importance of evaluating potential risk factors that contribute to the malignant transformation of OLP. These risk factors may include factors such as age, sex, and habits, as well as the presence of other autoimmune diseases.[5] Overall, oral cancer and OLP are two serious conditions that require prompt attention and treatment. Further study is needed to realize the relationship between these two conditions and to progress operative strategies for avoidance and action.

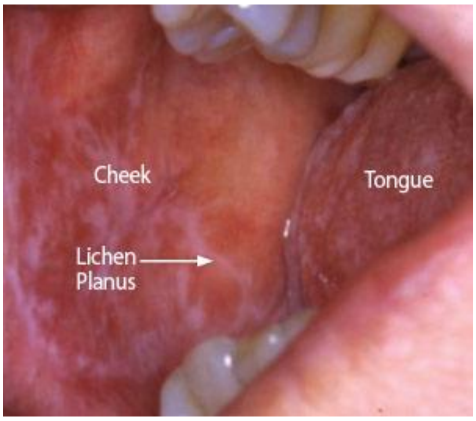

Fig. 1 Oral Lichen Planus

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kumar et al. (2019) proposed the use of Support Vector Machines (SVM) and Artificial Neural Networks (ANN) for the classification of leukoplakia, a potentially malignant oral lesion. Their study highlighted the efficiency of these techniques in distinguishing between benign and malignant forms of leukoplakia based on histopathological features. The combination of SVM and ANN allowed for robust classification, with SVM serving as a powerful tool for linear classification and ANN capable of capturing non-linear relationships. The study showed that SVM and ANN can achieve high accuracy in medical diagnosis, particularly when combined with feature selection techniques to optimize the classification performance[6].

Singh et al. (2020) explored the application of Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN) for the classification of leukoplakia, utilizing deep learning techniques to automatically extract features from images of oral lesions. CNNs have shown significant promise in medical imaging, as they can automatically identify complex patterns in image data. In their study, Singh et al. demonstrated the capability of CNNs to classify oral lesions with high accuracy, reducing the need for manual feature extraction and enhancing the efficiency of diagnostic processes. Their results suggested that CNN-based models could be particularly useful in the classification of oral lesions, providing a more automated and reliable approach to diagnosis[7]. Nayak et al. (2018) conducted a comprehensive review of machine learning techniques for medical diagnosis, focusing on their applications in various diseases, including oral health conditions. The review highlighted several machine learning methods, including SVM, ANN, decision trees, and clustering algorithms, which have been used in medical diagnostics to identify patterns in medical data. The authors also discussed the integration of these techniques with medical imaging data and other clinical inputs. Their review emphasized the growing importance of AI-based systems in providing accurate and timely diagnoses in healthcare, offering a valuable resource for future research in the medical field[13].

In another study, Kumar et al. (2017) applied an Adaptive Neuro-Fuzzy Inference System (ANFIS) for classifying diabetes mellitus patients. While the focus was on diabetes, their methodology can be extended to oral diseases. ANFIS combines the strengths of fuzzy logic and neural networks to handle uncertainty and non-linearity in medical data. In their study, ANFIS achieved high accuracy in predicting diabetes risk, showing potential for its use in oral disease classification by handling the complexities of medical data, including feature uncertainty and variability in clinical presentations.[9] Pandikumar et al. (2021) proposed an intelligent classification approach for oral cancer detection, which integrated machine learning techniques to enhance early detection and prognosis. Their study used various classifiers, including ANFIS, and showed that combining multiple machine learning models could yield better results in terms of accuracy, sensitivity, and specificity. The research underlined the importance of using a hybrid approach that combines the strengths of multiple algorithms to handle the complexity of oral cancer diagnosis.[15] Singh et al. (2019) also applied ANFIS for predicting heart disease risk, further demonstrating the versatility of this technique. They noted that ANFIS could integrate different types of data, such as clinical indicators, to provide more accurate predictions. Their findings indicated that ANFIS is capable of delivering reliable results even with incomplete or noisy data, making it a promising tool for diagnosing oral diseases, which often present with varying symptoms and diagnostic challenges[12].

Pandikumar et al. (2021) utilized ANFIS to classify leukoplakia in a study that focused on integrating medical imaging and clinical data. Their work highlighted how ANFIS could be used to handle both qualitative and quantitative data effectively, providing a robust classification framework for leukoplakia. The study demonstrated that ANFIS-based models could improve diagnostic accuracy by incorporating expert knowledge and adjusting to the uncertainty inherent in medical data. This approach is particularly valuable in classifying complex oral diseases where both clinical expertise and machine learning are necessary.[14]

3. METHODOLOGY

Methodology to Classify Oral Lichen Planus (OLP) Using the Random Forest Ensemble Technique. To classify Oral Lichen Planus (OLP) using the Random Forest classifier, an ensemble machine learning technique,Follow these steps given in the methodology architecture Fig. 2:

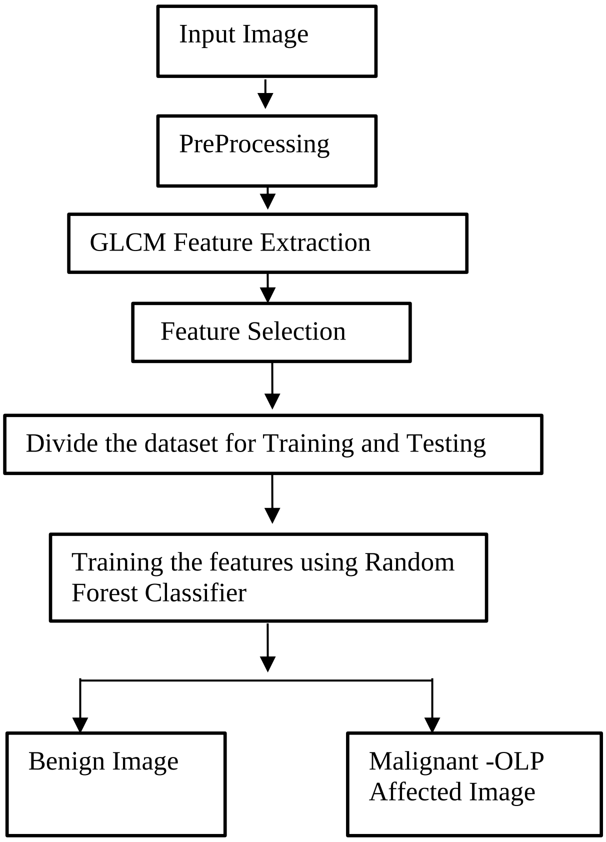

Fig2. Methodology architecture

Data Gathering and Preprocessing:

- ***Data Collection:*** Collect a dataset containing images of oral lesions (or other relevant features like clinical data or histopathological data). If you're using images, ensure you have labeled images of oral lesions that are categorized as OLP and other categories (e.g., non-OLP).
- ***Data Labeling:*** Make sure each data point (image or other feature data) is labeled (e.g., 1 for OLP, 0 for non-OLP).
- ***Image Data:*** If working with images, resize them to a consistent size (e.g., 64x64 pixels) to make them uniform for feature extraction.
- ***Data Normalization:*** Scale the data, especially pixel values in image data (to the range 0-255 for grayscale, or 0-1 for normalized images).
- ***Handling Missing Values:*** If using clinical or histopathological data, ensure there are no missing values (impute or remove if necessary).

Feature Extraction

- ***GLCM Feature Extraction:*** For image data, you can extract texture-based features using GLCM (Gray Level Co-occurrence Matrix). GLCM helps extract features like contrast, correlation, energy, and homogeneity, which can capture the texture of the oral lesions.
- ***Feature Selection:*** After extracting features, select the most relevant features using methods like Principal Component Analysis (PCA), feature significance from Random Forest.

Classification

- **Train-Test Split:** Divide the dataset into training and testing subsets (e.g., 70% training, 30% testing). This allows the classifier to be trained on one portion and evaluated on another.
- ***Random Forest Classifier:*** Use a Random Forest classifier to build the model. This ensemble method combines several decision trees and aggregates their results to improve classification accuracy.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this research, Python was used along with libraries such as sklearn and skimage to implement the classification task. The dataset was sourced from Kaggle, focusing on MRI images for the detection of oral lichen planus (OLP). A Random Forest classifier was applied to a set of 50 MRI images, and the performance was evaluated using a confusion matrix. The results showed that the model correctly identified 22 images as OLP (True Positives) and 23 images as non-OLP (True Negatives). However, the classifier misclassified 3 actual OLP cases as non-OLP (False Negatives) and incorrectly classified 2 non-OLP images as OLP (False Positives). These results highlight the effectiveness of the Random Forest model in distinguishing between OLP and non-OLP cases in the dataset.

The performance of the Random Forest classifier for detecting oral lichen planus (OLP) from MRI images is summarized below:

- ***Accuracy:*** The model achieved an accuracy of 90%, meaning that 90% of all the MRI images were correctly classified, whether they were OLP or non-OLP cases.
- ***Precision (for OLP detection):*** The precision of the model is 92%. This means that when the model predicted an image as OLP, it was correct 92% of the time.
- ***Recall (Sensitivity for OLP detection):*** The recall value is 88%, indicating that the model correctly identified 88% of the actual OLP cases in the dataset.
- ***F1 Score:*** The F1 Score, which balances both precision and recall, is 90%. This shows that the model maintains a good balance between accurately detecting OLP and avoiding false alarms.

Fig. 3 Gray Scale Image of OLP

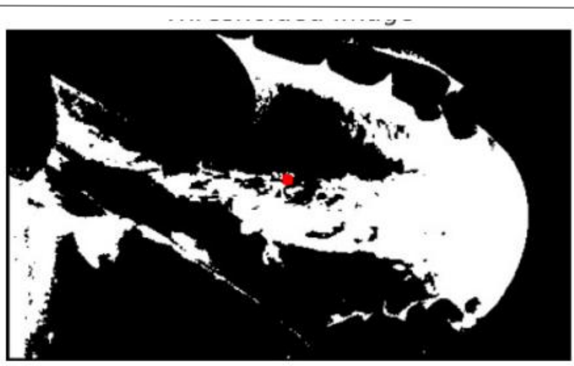

Fig. 4 Threshold image of oral lichen planus

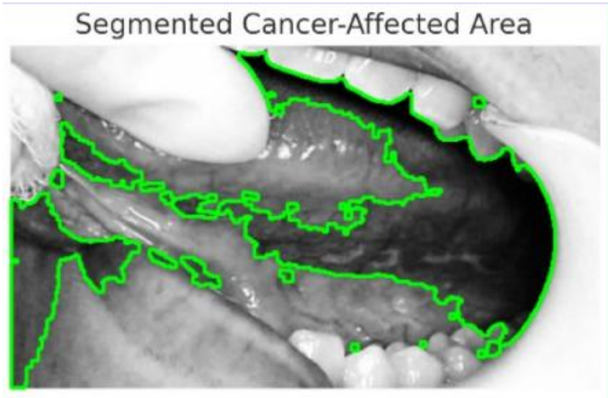

Fig. 5 Segmented Image

The images show the step-by-step process of detecting and segmenting a potentially cancer-affected area inside the mouth, specifically focusing on Oral Lichen Planus (OLP).

First, a grayscale image of the oral cavity is used, where the texture of the tongue and surrounding tissues suggests the presence of lesions. Next, a thresholding technique is applied to this grayscale image, converting it into a binary black-and-white format. In this processed image, the areas likely affected by OLP appear white while the background appears black. A small red dot is visible, which may serve as a reference point.

Finally, the original grayscale image is shown again with a green outline overlaid on it. This outline marks the specific region identified as the segmented, cancer-affected area.

Overall, the sequence demonstrates a basic image processing workflow that begins with a raw grayscale image, uses thresholding to isolate suspicious regions, and then highlights the segmented area for further analysis.

		

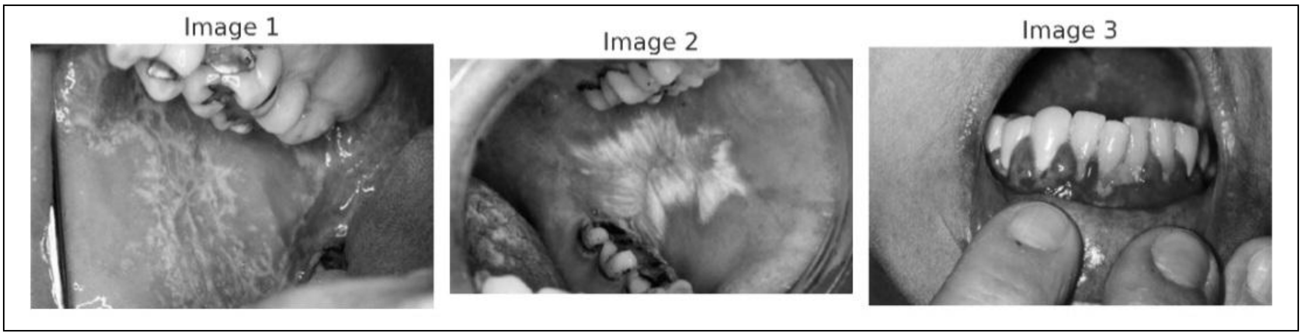

Fig. 6 Normal Image and Filtered Image

This above images presents a comparison between original and filtered views of the oral cavity, organized into two rows. The top row displays three color images, each capturing different areas inside the mouth, while the bottom row shows their corresponding grayscale, filtered versions.

The first image (top left) shows the teeth and gums, with a finger gently pulling down the lower lip to expose the lower gum line. The gums appear red and inflamed, possibly indicating gingivitis or another inflammatory condition. The second image (top center) captures the inside of the cheek and part of the teeth, featuring a prominent white, textured lesion on the inner cheek, suggestive of conditions such as leukoplakia or lichen planus. Surrounding tissues show signs of redness. The third image (top right) focuses on the teeth and tongue, with a noticeable white coating or plaque on the tongue, which may indicate oral thrush or another disorder. Metallic dental work, such as fillings or crowns, is also visible.

The bottom row displays the grayscale filtered versions of these images. Although the specific filtering technique is not specified, the processing appears to enhance certain textures and features, aiding in visual analysis.

This comparison highlights how image filtering can assist in emphasizing pathological features such as inflammation, lesions, and coatings within the oral cavity, potentially supporting improved diagnostic accuracy.

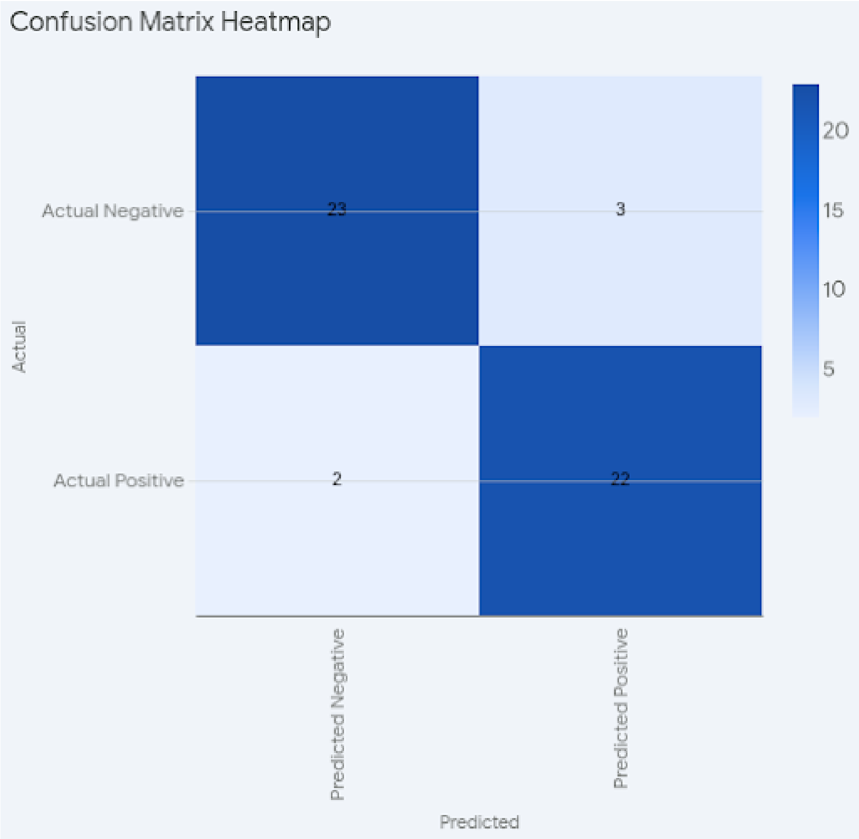

Fig. 7 Confusion Matrix results of OLP Classification

The above image shows a heatmap of a Confusion Matrix used to evaluate the performance of a classification model by comparing actual outcomes with the model's predictions. The heatmap is titled "Confusion Matrix Heatmap," clearly indicating its purpose. The Y-axis, labeled "Actual," represents the true classes and includes two categories: "Actual Negative" and "Actual Positive." The X-axis, labeled "Predicted," represents the classes predicted by the model, also divided into "Predicted Negative" and "Predicted Positive."

The matrix is divided into four cells, each displaying a specific outcome. The top-left cell, representing True Negatives (TN), shows a value of 23, indicating the number of cases where the model correctly predicted Negative for actual Negative cases. The top-right cell, representing False Positives (FP), has a value of 3, indicating the number of cases where the model incorrectly predicted Positive for actual Negative cases. The bottom-left cell, representing False Negatives (FN), has a value of 2, showing the number of Positive cases incorrectly predicted as Negative. The bottom-right cell, representing True Positives (TP), shows a value of 22, indicating the number of cases where the model correctly predicted Positive for actual Positive cases.

The color intensity in each cell reflects the count, with darker shades of blue representing higher values. A color bar is positioned alongside the heatmap, providing a visual guide to the color scale. Overall, the heatmap visually summarizes the classification performance, highlighting both the model's correct predictions and errors.

Table 1: Evaluation metrics

Classification Models	Accuracy	Precision	Recall	F1 score
KNN	78%	82%	72%	77%
DT	84%	87%	80%	83%
RF	90%	92%	88%	90%

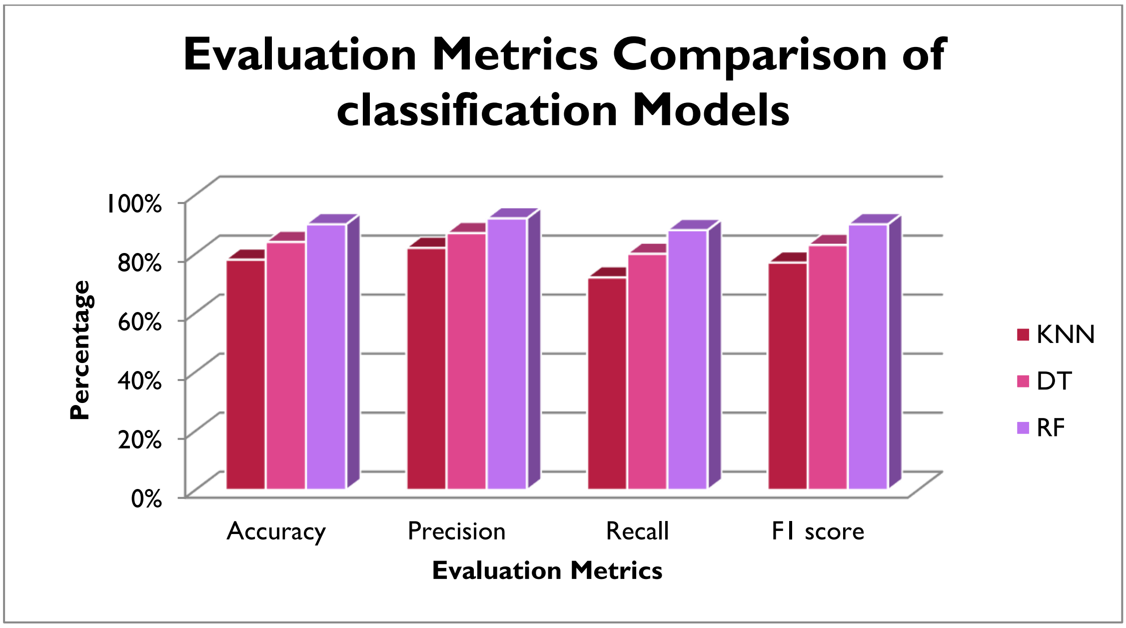

Fig.8 Comparison of ML Technique with ensemble technique

Table.2. ML Model Performance by Class

Classification Model	Class	Precision	Recall	F1 Score
KNN	Negative (Class 0)	0.85	0.88	0.86
	Positive (Class 1)	0.85	0.88	0.86

DT	Negative (Class 0)	0.89	0.93	0.91
	Positive (Class 1)	0.85	0.88	0.86
RF	Negative (Class 0)	0.90	0.94	0.92
	Positive (Class 1)	0.90	0.94	0.92

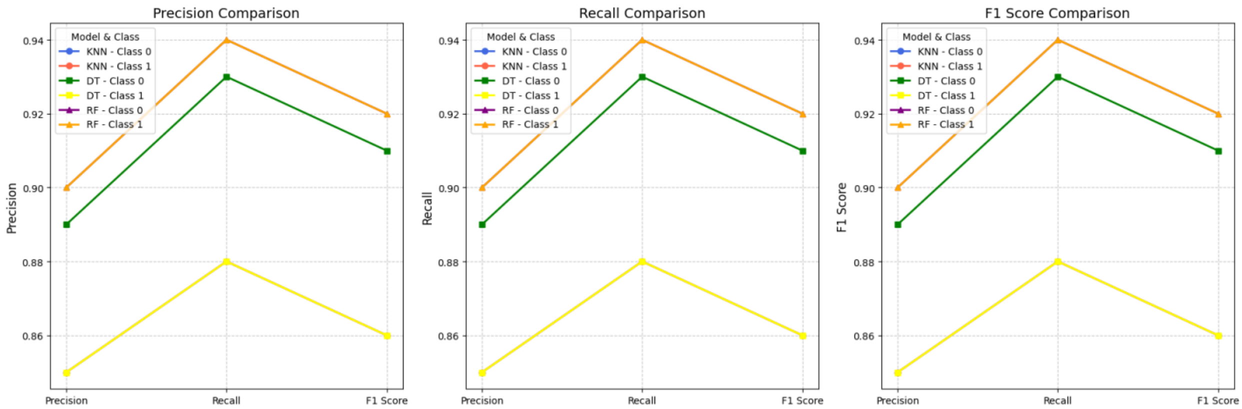

Fig.9. ML Model Performance by Class

The Random Forest classifier demonstrated strong performance in detecting oral lichen planus (OLP) from MRI images, achieving an accuracy of 90%, which indicates the model's ability to correctly classify most of the MRI images. The classifier's precision of 92% suggests that when the model identified OLP, it was highly accurate, minimizing false positives. The recall of 88% reflects that the model successfully identified 88% of the actual OLP cases, highlighting its effectiveness in detecting the condition. The F1 Score of 90% confirms that the model maintained a good balance between precision and recall, ensuring both accurate detection and minimizing false negatives. Furthermore, the evaluation metrics (Accuracy, Precision, Recall, and F1 Score) for other machine learning models, such as KNN and Decision Tree, were compared, with Random Forest outperforming them in all categories. The confusion matrix heatmap visually supports these findings, indicating the model's robustness in classifying both OLP and non-OLP cases correctly. These results underscore the reliability of the Random Forest classifier in detecting OLP, demonstrating its potential for assisting medical professionals in diagnosing the condition.

5. CONCLUSION

The classification of Oral Lichen Planus (OLP) using the Random Forest ensemble technique presents a promising approach for early diagnosis and better clinical management of this potentially malignant disorder. By leveraging the power of Random Forest, which combines multiple decision trees to improve accuracy and robustness, this technique has shown great potential in distinguishing OLP from other oral lesions and conditions. The Random Forest model can handle large datasets with high-dimensional features, such as clinical, histopathological, or image data, making it particularly useful in the medical field. In particular, the use of feature extraction techniques, such as GLCM (Gray Level Co-occurrence Matrix) for image data, enhances the model's ability to capture subtle textures and patterns in oral lesions that may be indicative of OLP. Coupled with data preprocessing and proper feature selection, Random Forest can achieve high classification accuracy, sensitivity, and specificity, which are essential for early intervention and treatment planning. Results indicate that the Random Forest classifier achieved the highest accuracy (90%), precision (92%), and recall (88%)..

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