

Image Correspondence

Black Hairy Tongue: An Uncommon Manifestation of Linezolid Therapy

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A 30-year-old male underwent pilonidal sinus surgery. After completing 14 days of Linezolid therapy, brownish discolouration of the tongue was noted, which could not be wiped off with gauze and the patient was diagnosed with black hairy tongue (BHT) due to Linezolid therapy [Figure 1]. Other known causes such as poor oral hygiene, smoking, alcohol or substance abuse were ruled out. The Naranjo's adverse drug reaction (ADR) probability scale resulted in a score of 7 (0–10), which corresponds to a probable ADR.^[1] The patient was advised to maintain good oral hygiene and clean his tongue with a soft toothbrush. Complete resolution of the lesions was seen after 2 weeks [Figure 2].

Ren *et al.*, reported, 19 cases of antibiotic-induced BHT and the culprits were Linezolid in ten cases, amoxicillin-clavulanate in four cases, minocycline in two cases and erythromycin, doxycycline, and metronidazole in one case each.^[2] Mannu *et al.*, reported a case of Linezolid-induced BHT.^[3]

It is a self-limiting condition and is also known as Lingua Villosa Nigra. A fraction (0.2%) of cases treated with Linezolid can have BHT and in few cases, tooth discoloration has also been reported. The proposed mechanism is alteration in the usual flora of mouth and growth of chromogenic



Figure 1: Brownish-black discolouration on the posterior aspect of the tongue 2 weeks after Linezolid therapy.

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Figure 2: Complete resolution of lesions 2 week after discontinuation of Linezolid.

bacteria resulting in discoloration. A hairy appearance could be facilitated by inadequate desquamation.^[2]

Ethical approval

Institutional Review Board approval is not required.

Declaration of patient consent

The authors certify that they have obtained all appropriate patient consent.

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Conflicts of interest

Dr. Yogesh Marfatia is on the Editorial Board of the journal.

Use of artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted technology for manuscript preparation

The authors confirm that there was no use of artificial intelligence (AI)-assisted technology for assisting in the writing or editing of the manuscript and no images were manipulated using AI.

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