

Image Correspondence

Hairy Tongue Induced by Piperacillin-Tazobactam

Shivangi Arora¹, Aishwaryaa Jayaramakrishnan¹, Deepti Celestine Dsouza¹

¹Department of Dermatology, Venereology and Leprosy, Kasturba Medical College Mangalore, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal, Karnataka, India.

*Corresponding author:

Deepti Celestine Dsouza,
Department of Dermatology,
Venereology and Leprosy,
Kasturba Medical College
Mangalore, Manipal Academy
of Higher Education, Manipal,
Karnataka, India.

deepti.dsouza@manipal.edu

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A 65-year-old male, diagnosed with Vacuoles, E1 enzyme, X-linked, Autoinflammatory, Somatic (VEXAS) syndrome and extended-spectrum beta-lactamase *Escherichia coli* urosepsis, was initiated on intravenous piperacillin-tazobactam. After 1 week of antibiotic therapy, he developed black discolouration of the tongue. On examination, the dorsum of the tongue showed black, elongated filiform papillae with a characteristic carpet-like appearance [Figure 1]. A clinical diagnosis of antibiotic-induced black hairy tongue was made, and the patient was advised to maintain proper oral hygiene.

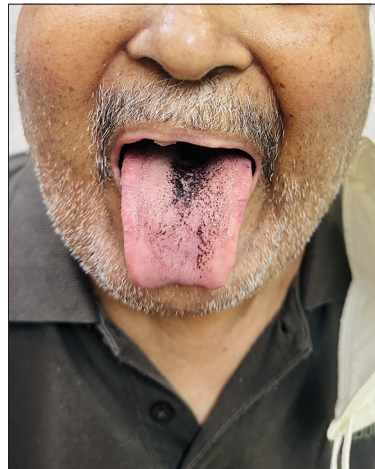


Figure 1: Black discoloration noted over the dorsal surface of the tongue.

Black hairy tongue, or lingua villosa nigra, is a rare and benign condition characterised by hypertrophy and defective desquamation of filiform papillae, leading to a black discoloration of the tongue. Its prevalence varies between 0.6% and 11.3%. Common predisposing factors include alcohol consumption, smoking, poor oral hygiene and the use of certain medications such as doxycycline, minocycline, amoxicillin-clavulanate and piperacillin-tazobactam. The condition typically resolves with the withdrawal of the causative agent and adherence to good oral hygiene practices.

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