Haemophilus ducreyi

Haemophilus ducreyi is a gram-negative pleomorphic coccobacillus that causes an acute sexually transmitted infection called a chancroid. This disease is rare in the United States and is most commonly seen in Africa and Southeast Asia. It is thought that chancroids may be an important cofactor in the transmission of HIV in these areas. Few days after inoculation, the person will develop a tender papule in the external genitalia that erodes, producing a painful ulcer. Haemophilus ducreyi is also known to cause the regional lymph nodes, particularly in the inguinal region, to enlarge and become inflamed, and this is called a bubo. The inflamed lymph node may even erode the overlying skin to produce a draining ulcer. On Gram stain, Hameophilus ducreyi has a characteristic look of short parallel chains, often described as a school of fish appearance. It can be treated with either azithromycin or ceftriaxone.



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Characteristics

Gram-Negative
Graham-cracker Negative-devil
This is a gram-negative bacteria.

Coccobacillus
Cockeyed-rod
Coccobacillus is an intermediate shape between spherical coccus and rod-shaped bacilli.

Pleomorphic
Playdough-morphic-jar
Pleomorphic means that the bacteria can take on multiple physical forms.

Parallel Short Chains
Parallel Chains
On Gram stain, the bacteria appear as short parallel chains that are often described as a school of fish appearance.

School of Fish Appearance on Gram Stain
Fish shaped chains
On Gram stain, the bacteria appear as short parallel chains that are often described as a school of fish appearance.

Signs and Symptoms

Chancroid
Chained-droid
A chancroid is an acute, sexually transmitted ulcerative infection caused by Haemophilus ducreyi.

Painful Genital Ulcer
Ulcer-volcanoes on Penis-pole
Patients develop a painful ulcer involving the external genitalia. Initially, the lesion develops as a tender papule and then erodes to produce an irregular ulcer.

Buboes
Blue-bow
Inguinal lymph nodes may become enlarged and tender and can erode the overlying skin to produce a draining ulcer in the inguinal region.

Treatment

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Azithromycin

Zipper-mice

Azithromycin is a macrolide antibiotic that can be used as treatment for Haemophilus ducreyi.

Ceftriaxone

Chef-tri-axes

Ceftriaxone is a cephalosporin antibiotic that can be used as treatment for Haemophilus ducreyi.

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