

Please read this bit first

This CPD/ CEU exercise is designed to take approximately two hours as a small group exercise within your laboratory. The Thistle QA CPD No is: **MT00025**.

Please keep a register of those taking part in the exercise. When the exercise is completed, please ask using the above email address, and we will send you a sheet showing the correct responses to each question.

Each attendee should claim two CPD points for completing the questions correctly, by retaining a copy of the relevant Thistle QA Participation Certificate as proof of registration on a Thistle QA EQA.

Cycle 19 Organism 8.

The causative organism was *Serratia marcescens*.

Serratia marcescens is the most commonly isolated species of the genus. *Serratia* strains are motile, rarely ferment lactose, and produce extracellular DNase. The organism is widespread in the environment but not a common component of the human faecal flora. Most infections are acquired exogenously. Many environmental and some clinical strains of *S. marcescens* produce a red pigment, prodigiosin¹.

Infections caused by *S. marcescens* may begin with exogenous contamination and spread within or among hospitals by hands of personnel. Various medical apparatuses, intravenous fluids, and other solutions have often been implicated as a source of infection. The most common site of infection is the urinary tract, but the organism is frequently isolated from the respiratory tract and from wounds. Cases of osteomyelitis, infectious arthritis may follow haematogenous dissemination^{2,3}.

Infections caused by *S. marcescens* may be difficult to treat because of their resistance to a variety of antibiotics, including beta-lactams and aminoglycosides. Resistance to the fluoroquinolones and to trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole are also encountered. It is important that every effort is made to identify point sources of outbreaks and control the spread of the organism^{2,3}.

References

1. Hejazi, A., and Falkiner, FR. 1997. *Serratia marcescens*. *J. Med. Microbiol.* **46**:9.3-910.
2. Yu, VL. 1979. *Serratia marcescens*: Historical perspective and clinical review. *N. Eng J. Med.* **300**:887-893.
3. Acar, JF. 1986. *Serratia marcescens* infections. *Infect. Control.* **7**:273-278.

CPD Questions.

1. Why is *S. marcescens* a common cause of nosocomial infections?
2. What types of infections are caused by *S. marcescens*?

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