

# CASE 005

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**Histoplasmosis masquerading as malignancy and presenting as an isolated lesion in the oral cavity in an apparently immunocompetent individual.  
Could this be the first presentation of immunodeficiency?**

## ABSTRACT

Histoplasmosis is a systemic fungal disease that takes various clinical forms, among which oral lesions are rare. The disseminated form of the disease that usually occurs in association with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is one of the AIDS-defining diseases. Isolated oral histoplasmosis without systemic involvement, and without underlying immunosuppression is very rare. Herein, we report one such case of isolated oral histoplasmosis in an immunocompetent patient.

## INTRODUCTION

Histoplasmosis, also known as Darling's disease which was first described by Samuel Darling in 1905, is a systemic fungal infection caused by *Histoplasma capsulatum*, a dimorphic pathogenic fungus that grows in soil and material contaminated with bat or bird droppings<sup>1</sup>. There are three varieties of *Histoplasma*. *Histoplasma capsulatum* and *duboisii* are pathogenic to humans, and *farciminosum*, is an equine pathogen. Histoplasmosis is endemic in the central eastern United States (especially the Ohio and Mississippi River Valleys), in Central and South America, and Africa, but is less frequently reported in Asia and Europe<sup>2,3</sup>. Histoplasmosis is rare in India but is endemic in small regions of West Bengal, the Gangetic Plains and Western India<sup>1,2</sup>. Sporadic cases have been reported from southern India<sup>3</sup>. The last systematic review of histoplasmosis in India was carried out in 1994. Histoplasmosis is clinically classified into three forms: (1) a primary acute pulmonary form that is usually asymptomatic; (2) a chronic pulmonary form that often occurs in the presence of underlying pulmonary disease; and (3) a disseminated form, which is characterized by the progressive spread of infection to extrapulmonary sites<sup>1</sup>. Disseminated histoplasmosis mainly affects the mononuclear phagocyte system, with bone marrow involvement, resulting in changes in the blood picture. It often occurs