

## Monkeypox Infection Mimicking Oral Primary Syphilis

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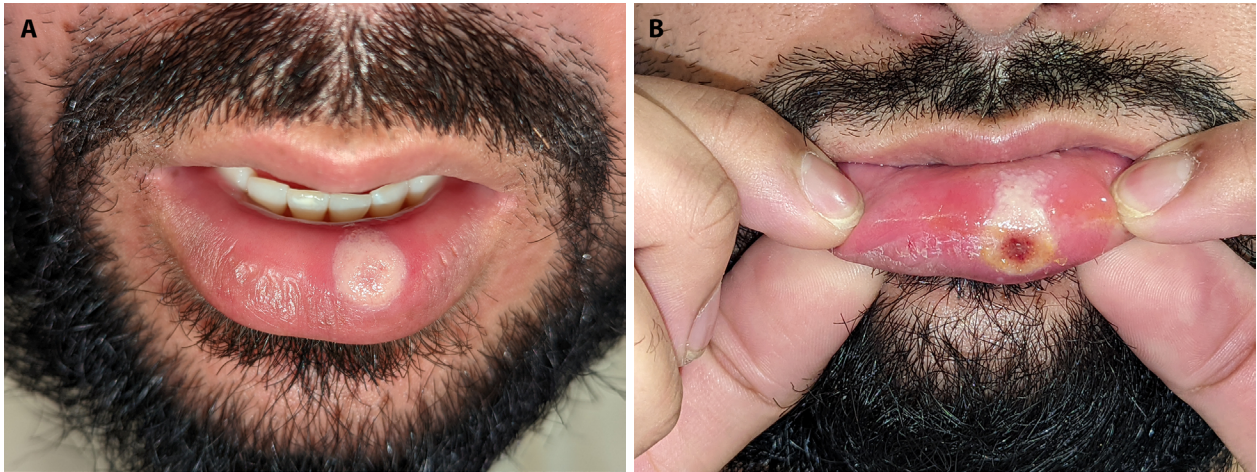
### Case Presentation

A 32-year-old HIV-positive man who has sex with men (MSM) presented to emergency department with a two-day history of a firm, painless solitary chancre-like nodule on lower lip (Figure 1A), associated with tender bilateral cervical lymphadenopathy in the absence of other systemic symptoms. The patient reported practicing unprotected receptive oral sex 3 weeks before. He re-consulted 2 days later due to the onset of tenderness and swelling of the lower lip with associated fever. Physical examination then revealed lesion enlargement and ulceration as well as development of clustered satellite papules on labial mucosa (Figure 1B). A polymerase chain reaction (PCR) of swabs obtained from the ulcer and

pharynx were positive for monkeypox virus (MPXV). Performed venereal disease research laboratory (VDRL) and Treponema pallidum particle agglutination (TPPA) tests were repeatedly negative. Bacterial cultures obtained from the ulcer, pharynx and rectal swabs were all sterile.

### Teaching Point

Because of shared risk factors and similar incubation period, it is reasonable to include MPXV infection in the differential diagnosis of primary syphilis in patients at risk presenting with a solitary lesion in the oral or genital regions. This has already been suggested in two recently published case reports [1,2].



**Figure 1.** (A, B) Solitary, firm, chancre-like painless nodule on the lower lip (A), subsequent physical examination revealed enlargement and ulceration of the lesion as well as development of clustered satellite papules on labial mucosa (B).

In this scenario, it may be useful looking out for the presence of pain and edema in the involved region, development of satellite papules as shown in this case or the appearance of painful lymphadenopathy, all of them pointing to the diagnosis of MPVX infection, with PCR being the diagnostic test of choice.

The patient in this manuscript has given written informed consent to publication of his case details.

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