

improved and he was discharged on long-term trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole and doxycycline. Because of renal insufficiency, trimethoprim/sulfamethoxazole was switched to moxifloxacin after 2 weeks. Chest radiograph results were improving 3 months later.

References

1. Rahdar HA, Gharabaghi MA, Bahador A, Shahraki-Zahedani S, Karami-Zarandi M, Mahmoudi S, et al. Pulmonary *Nocardia ignorata* infection in gardener, Iran,

2017. *Emerg Infect Dis.* 2020;26:610–1. <https://doi.org/10.3201/eid2603.180725>

2. Coussement J, Lebeaux D, van Delden C, Guillot H, Freund R, Marbus S, et al.; European Study Group for Nocardia in Solid Organ Transplantation. *Nocardia* infection in solid organ transplant recipients: a multicenter European case-control study. *Clin Infect Dis.* 2016;63:338–45. <https://doi.org/10.1093/cid/ciw241>

Address for correspondence: Yoram A. Puius, Division of Infectious Diseases, Montefiore Medical Center, 111 East 210th Street, Bronx, NY 10467, USA; e-mail: ypuius@montefiore.org

etymology

Nocardia [no-kahr' e-əm]

Christoffel J. Opperman

The genus *Nocardia* is named in honor of Edmond Isidore Etienne Nocard (1850–1903), a French veterinarian and microbiologist who discovered the bacteria in 1888 from a bovine farcy case. He named this filamentous, branching bacteria *Streptothrix farcinica* (Greek *streptós-* “twisted” and *thrix* “hair”). Farcy (old French *farcin*), is a form of cutaneous glanders, characterized by superficial lymph node swelling and ulcerating nodule formation under the skin (Late Latin *farciminum* “glanders,” from Latin *farcimen* “a sausage,” from *farcire* “to stuff”).

One year later, Trevisan characterized and termed the bacteria *Nocardia farcinica*, creating the genus *Nocardia*. In 1890, Eppinger isolated a similar organism from a brain abscess and called it *Cladothrix asteroides* (Greek *kládos-* “branch” and *-thrix* “hair”) because of its star-shaped colonies (Greek *asteroieidēs* “starlike”). Blanchard renamed the organism *Nocardia asteroides* in 1896. Additional taxonomic work in 1962 resulted in *Nocardia asteroides* replacing *Nocardia farcinica* as the type species for the genus *Nocardia*.

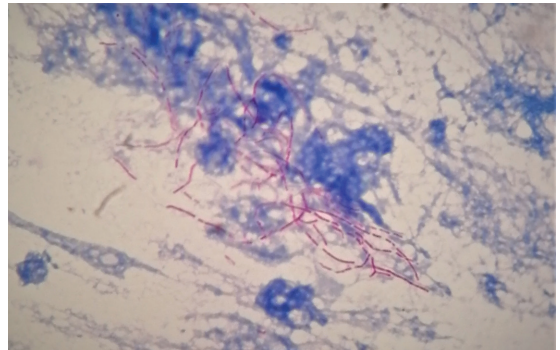


Figure. Twisted hair bacteria (*Nocardia* spp.) described by Edmond Nocard, from a bronchial alveolar lavage sample. Nocardiosis is an opportunistic infection, commonly associated with pulmonary disease. *Nocardia* are partially acid-fast, filamentous, branching bacilli (modified Kinyoun acid-fast stain using weak acid [0.5% sulfuric acid] for decolorization and methylene blue counterstain, original magnification x1,000.) Photograph courtesy of the author.

Sources

1. Blanchard R. 1896. Plant pests excluding bacteria [in French]. In: Bouchard C, editor. *Treatise of general pathology*. Volume II. Paris: Mason. p. 811–926.
2. Gordon RE, Mihm JM. The type species of the genus *Nocardia*. *J Gen Microbiol.* 1962;27:1–10. <https://doi.org/10.1099/00221287-27-1-1>
3. Nocard E. Note on the disease of oxen from Guadeloupe known as farcin [in French]. *Ann Inst Pasteur (Paris)*. 1888;2:293–302.
4. Saubolle MA, Sussland D. Nocardiosis: review of clinical and laboratory experience. *J Clin Microbiol.* 2003;41:4497–501. <https://doi.org/10.1128/JCM.41.10.4497-4501.2003>
5. Trevisan V. 1889. Genera and species of the batteries [in Italian]. Milan: Zanaboni and Gabuzzi; 1889.

Address for correspondence: Christoffel J. Opperman, National Health Laboratory Service, Department of Medical Microbiology, University of Cape Town and Groote Schuur Hospital, Cape Town, South Africa.; email: stefanopperman1@gmail.com

Author affiliation: Groote Schuur Hospital, Cape Town, South Africa

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3201/eid2611.ET2611>