

Strain 0122, a Contaminating Skin Corynebacterium

TO THE EDITOR:

In a numerical taxonomic study on vaginal coryneform bacteria and possibly related organisms (²), we included strain 0122, received from J. Delville, Brussels, Belgium. Strain 0122 was isolated from a leproma and is claimed to be a diphtheroid form of *Mycobacterium leprae* (¹). In total, 145 differential characters were analyzed using the simple matching, jaccard, and pattern coefficients. Cluster composition was not markedly affected by the coefficient used or by test error, estimated at 6.5%. Strain 0122 clustered closely (>85%, simple matching coefficient) with reference strains of *Corynebacterium* species (*Corynebacterium diphtheriae* NCTC 3984, *C. diphtheriae* ITG 121, *Corynebacterium pseudotuberculosis* NCTC 3450, and *Corynebacterium xerosis* NCTC 9755). Our hypothesis is that strain 0122 is, in fact, a

contaminating skin corynebacterium rather than *M. leprae*.

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