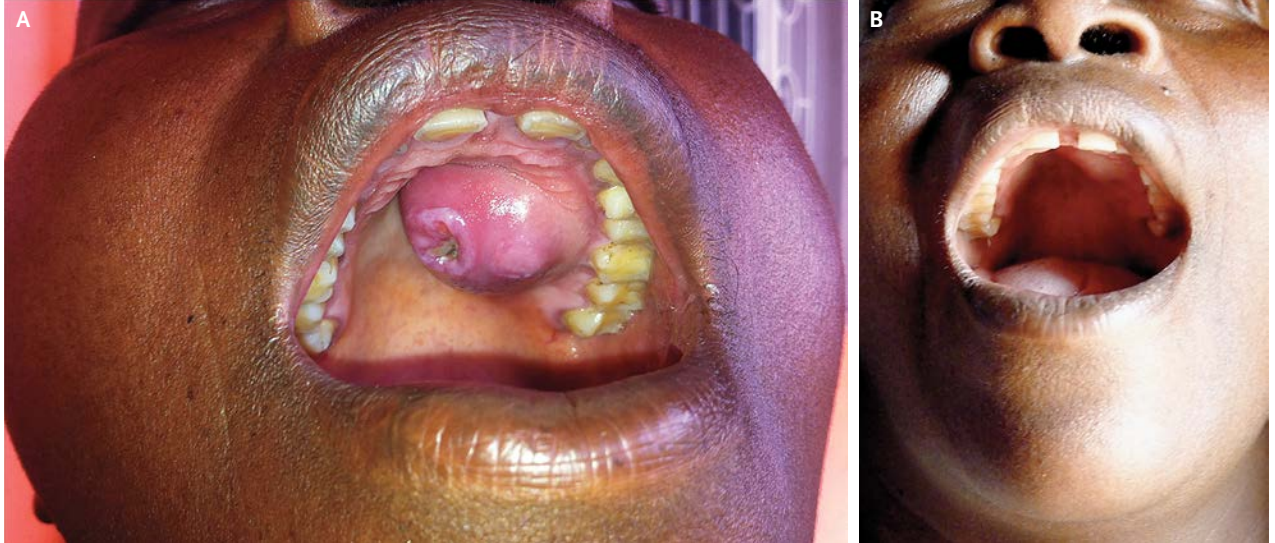


IMAGES IN CLINICAL MEDICINE

Lindsey R. Baden, M.D., *Editor*

## Syphilitic Gumma



**A** 45-YEAR-OLD WOMAN PRESENTED TO AN OUTREACH CLINIC IN RURAL Uganda with a 1-year history of a progressively enlarging ulcerated mass on the hard palate (Panel A). The mass had initially been painless but more recently had become painful and was causing difficulty in speaking and swallowing. She had received a diagnosis of cancer and was attempting to sell her home to pay for surgical resection. She had no history of syphilitic symptoms or treatment. The results on *Treponema pallidum* hemagglutination assay were positive for syphilis; nontreponemal testing was not locally available. Serologic analysis for human immunodeficiency virus was negative. Tertiary syphilis with an oral gumma was diagnosed. The patient was treated with three intramuscular injections of 2.4 million units of penicillin G benzathine at 1-week intervals. At follow-up 2 months after the end of treatment, there was resolution of the mass and symptoms (Panel B). In the oral cavity, gummas may occur as masses on the hard palate or tongue that frequently ulcerate.

William Cherniak, M.D.  
Michael Silverman, M.D.

Bridge to Health Medical and Dental  
Toronto, ON, Canada  
william@bridgetohealth.ca

DOI: 10.1056/NEJMicm1313142

Copyright © 2014 Massachusetts Medical Society.