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COMMON IDENTIFIED CORAL DISEASES

Coral reefs are among the most biologically diverse ecosystems on earth and harbor a large number of unique marine taxa. However, over the last few decades, 27% of coral reefs have been destroyed worldwide, and in places such as Belize, up to 75% of the coral reef habitat has been lost. The destruction of coral reef ecosystems is a complex phenomenon

and can be attributed to a combination of factors. Bacterial and fungal agents may cause different reef diseases. Enumerate some of them.

Aspergillosis Disease. The pathogen is *Aspergillus sydowii*, a terrestrial fungus, which infects gorgonia after germination of spores on the coral surface. Aspergillosis is a lesion producing fungal infection of Caribbean soft corals.

Bacterial Bleaching Disease. Two known causative agents are *Vibrio shiloi* and *V. patagonica*. Bacterial bleaching occurs in the Mediterranean scleractinian coral *Oculina patagonica* (Kushmaro 1996).

Black Band-Disease. Black band disease is characterized by complete coral tissue degradation due to a pathogenic microbial consortium that appears as a dark red or black migrating microbial mat. The black band disease microbial consortium is structurally and functionally identical to cyanobacterial-dominated microbial mats found in other illuminated, sulfide-rich environments (Carlton, 1995).

White Band-Disease. White band disease is characterized by complete coral tissue degradation of Caribbean acroporid corals. Two species are affected, *Acropora palmata* and *A. cervicornis* (Gladfelter, 1982). The shift is from domination by pseudomonads to domination by *Vibrio carchariae*.

White Plague-Disease. Plague is characterized by a sharp line between apparently healthy coral tissue and freshly exposed coral skeleton. There is no obvious microbial band present. Plague is caused by the bacterial pathogen *Aurantimonas corallicida*, *gen nov. sp. nov.* (Denner, 2005).

White Pox. White pox is characterized by circular lesions. The pathogen is *Serratia marcescens*, a gram negative member of the enterobacteria. (Cervino, 2001).

The wide variety of pathogens and caused damages makes us think of devising of new methods and recollecting of known struggle skills against fungal and bacterial harmful factors.

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