

# THINK FUNGUS AND STAY CLEAR OF DOUBLE TROUBLE!

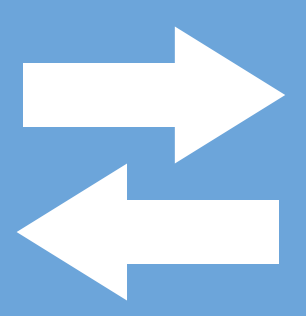
Serious fungal diseases can occur together with other illnesses and can be mistaken for, or masked by these illnesses

## DIMORPHIC FUNGAL DISEASES



### WHAT ARE THE DIMORPHIC FUNGI?

- ▶ The dimorphic fungi exist as moulds in the environment (25°C) and convert to a yeast form at body temperature (37°C).
- ▶ Their ability to convert to a yeast form makes them virulent and able to cause invasive disease.



### HOW DO I GET ONE OF THESE INFECTIONS?

- ▶ These infections include blastomycosis, emergomycosis, histoplasmosis, sporotrichosis.
- ▶ The spores (conidia) of dimorphic fungi can be inhaled from the environment.
- ▶ In some cases, the spores are inoculated through the skin when the skin is injured.
- ▶ *Histoplasma capsulatum* and *Sporothrix schenckii* are two thermally dimorphic fungi known to cause outbreaks in occupational (workplace) settings.



### WHO IS AT RISK FOR THESE INFECTIONS?

- ▶ Both immunocompetent and immunocompromised individuals can be infected with dimorphic fungi.
- ▶ However, emergomycosis has only been reported in immunocompromised persons.



### HOW ARE THESE INFECTIONS DIAGNOSED AND TREATED?

- ▶ The symptoms of some dimorphic fungal infections may be similar to pulmonary tuberculosis (PTB), and include fever, cough, fatigue, night sweats, & chest pains.
- ▶ They are diagnosed using chest X-Ray, examination of stained tissue (but this cannot discriminate between the different dimorphic fungi), fungal culture (but slow growth, and can take up to 4 weeks to confirm diagnosis), antigen testing and molecular testing.
- ▶ Treatment may include amphotericin B and/or an azole.




### HOW CAN THIS INFECTION BE PREVENTED?

- ▶ These infections are difficult to prevent.
- ▶ People living with HIV should take ART to strengthen their immune systems and prevent serious infections with these fungi.
- ▶ People with advanced HIV should avoid places such as underground caves or wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) at all times.



#FUNGALDISEASEAWARENESSWEEK EARLY DIAGNOSIS OF FUNGAL DISEASE LEADS TO LIFE-SAVING TREATMENT. #THINKFUNGUS

 NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNICABLE DISEASES  
Division of the National Health Laboratory Service