

BACK FORTY M I N E

BLASTOMYCOSIS

WHAT IS IT?

Blastomycosis is an infection caused by a fungus called Blastomyces. The fungus is naturally occurring, and most often found in areas surrounding the Ohio and Mississippi River valleys and the Great Lakes. It thrives in wet environments, such as riverbanks, lakes and swamps. However, it can also be found in damp soil and decaying matter, such as wooded areas.

>> CAUSES

People and animals can get blastomycosis by breathing in microscopic spores from the air after soil containing the fungus has been disturbed. Animals are more prone since they are closer to the ground digging in the dirt or following a scent.

>> RISK AND PREVENTION

Anyone can get Blastomycosis, especially those participating in outdoor activities in wooded areas (e.g. forestry, camping, hunting, hiking).

The symptoms of blastomycosis are often similar to the symptoms of flu or other lung infections, and can include things such as fever, cough, fatigue, and chest pain. Symptoms usually appear between 3 weeks and 3 months after a person breathes in the fungal spores.

If you're concerned that you've been exposed to blastomycosis, contact your primary care physician. Pets, particularly dogs, can get blastomycosis. If you think that your pet has come in contact with blastomycosis, contact your veterinarian.

>> RESOURCES

Menominee Health Department
909 10th Avenue, Menominee, MI 49858
Phone: (906) 863-4451
<http://www.phdm.org>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
1600 Clifton Road Atlanta, GA 30329
Phone: (800) 232-4636
www.cdc.gov

**BLASTOMYCOSIS IS NOT
CONTAGIOUS. IT CANNOT
SPREAD BETWEEN
PEOPLE OR BETWEEN
PEOPLE AND ANIMALS.**