Quiz: Blastomycosis Diagnosed in a Nonhyperendemic Area

EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this activity, participants will be able to:

1. Understand the epidemiology of blastomycosis.
2. Recognize the varied presentations of patients presenting with blastomycosis.
3. Appreciate the appropriate evaluation and treatment of patients with blastomycosis.

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QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following statements concerning blastomycosis is false?

☐ Blastomycosis is caused by the dimorphic fungus *Blastomyces dermatitidis* which is found in wet, forested areas near rivers and streams.

☐ The organism usually enters the host through the lungs, where it can cause an asymptomatic infection, a localized pneumonia, or severe acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS); thereafter, it can disseminate to other tissues, such as bones, central nervous system, liver, spleen, bone marrow, genitourinary tract, and skin.

☐ In hyperendemic counties in northern Wisconsin, health care providers maintain an index of suspicion for blastomycosis, allowing recognition in the initial pulmonary disease phase.

☐ Chest radiographs are highly characteristic for blastomycosis, generally showing a localized infiltrate.

2. The incidence rate for blastomycosis in Wisconsin varies from as low as 0.17 cases per 100,000 in the current study to as high as 101.3 cases per 100,000 in the hyperendemic area of Eagle River, Wisconsin.

☐ True

☐ False

3. Which of the following statements concerning the findings in the present study is false?

☐ Being a current or former smoker was a predisposition to infection with *Blastomyces dermatitidis*.

☐ Although pulmonary involvement was noted in 85%, more than a quarter of patients had extrapulmonary disease as well.

☐ Serological studies were the most useful method of making the diagnosis of blastomycosis.

☐ In a majority of the cases, symptoms and signs suggestive of bacterial pneumonia were treated with various antibacterials prior to the diagnosis of blastomycosis.

☐ Skin lesions were the most common manifestation of extrapulmonary disease.

4. Maintaining a high level of suspicion for blastomycosis in patients presenting with pulmonary symptoms and signs with or without extrapulmonary manifestations is the key to making the diagnosis of this disorder and its prompt treatment.

☐ True

☐ False