WHAT IS VALLEY FEVER?

Valley Fever (coccidioidomycosis) is a disease caused by a fungus found in the soil of the Southwest region of the United States. The fungus is also found in parts of Mexico, and Central and South America.

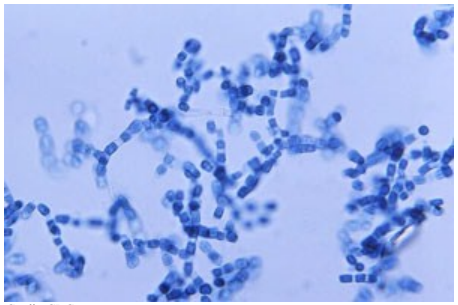
People may get sick if they breathe in the fungus. The fungus gets into the air through wind, digging and other activities that disturb soil. It can infect the lungs and other parts of the body.

VALLEY FEVER IS NOT CONTAGIOUS

WHO GETS VALLEY FEVER?

Anyone who visits or lives in areas where Valley Fever occurs can contract it. Pets and other animals can get Valley Fever, too.

Valley Fever is not contagious. It is not spread from one person to another.



Credit: CDC

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Most people (60%) who are infected with Valley Fever have only mild or no symptoms. The rest have illness that may last for months or even years. The disease usually affects the lungs and can cause **pneumonia**. Common symptoms are:

- Fatigue
- Fever
- Cough
- Headaches
- Rash
- Night sweats
- Weight loss
- Lack of appetite
- Joint or muscle aches

Credit: CDC

In some people, the disease may spread to other parts of the body such as bones, skin, joints, or the brain, This can be very serious and may even cause death.

ANYONE WHO SPENDS TIME IN PLACES WHERE VALLEY FEVER OCCURS CAN GET IT

HOW IS VALLEY FEVER DIAGNOSED?

Your doctor can order a blood test for Valley Fever. Your doctor may also test other body fluids, take a chest x-ray, or do a biopsy.

If you have pneumonia, you should ask your doctor to test you for Valley Fever.

WHO IS MORE LIKELY TO GET SEVERE DISEASE?

Most people will not get severe disease. People more likely to get it include:

- African Americans
- Filipinos
- Pregnant women
- People taking medications such as steroids
- People whose bodies have trouble fighting off infection including people with:
  - HIV or AIDS
  - Cancer
  - Diabetes
  - Organ or bone marrow transplants

AVOID BLOWING DUST

HOW IS VALLEY FEVER TREATED?

Most people who have Valley Fever don't need treatment. People with severe disease may need to be treated with antifungal drugs. Talk to your doctor about treatment options.

CAN VALLEY FEVER BE PREVENTED?

There is no vaccine to prevent Valley Fever at this time. Avoiding activities that stir up airborne dirt is recommended, but is not a certain means of prevention. Use common sense and stay out of blowing dust.

WHAT IS BEING DONE ABOUT VALLEY FEVER?

The Arizona Department of Health Services is investigating how people are affected by Valley Fever and educating healthcare providers and the public about the disease.

The Valley Fever Center for Excellence (VFCE) promotes research, education, and improved patient care for Valley Fever. The VFCE is investigating a new Valley Fever treatment called nikkomycin Z. Scientific researchers are working to develop a vaccine for Valley Fever.

Credit: CDC

WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT VALLEY FEVER?

If you think you might have Valley Fever, ask your doctor to test you for it. Talk to your family and friends about Valley Fever.

Support Valley Fever research and awareness. Tax-free donations can be mailed to the Valley Fever Center for Excellence. Checks should be made payable to the University of Arizona Foundation. Visit www.vfce.arizona.edu.

To learn more about Valley Fever, contact us or visit our website.

Arizona Department of Health Services

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COUGH
HEADACHES
FEVER
ACHING
JOINTS
EXHAUSTED
NIGHT
RASH
SWEATS

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Valley Fever

Arizona Department of Health Services