

Cats: seek and you might find.



Stertorous Noise

An indoor MC 9 yr old DSH presented to the University of Montreal for a 4 month history of respiratory noise described as inspiratory dyspnea with marked stertor on exam. No nasal discharge or deformity was noted. Advanced imaging demonstrated a polypoid mass of 2 x 1 cm in the nasopharynx extending to the tip of the soft palate. Nasopharyngoscopy allowed removal of the entire yellow-brown mass by grasping its stalk. Pyogranulomatous inflammation and cryptococcal organisms were identified on histology and cryptococcal antigen titer was positive.

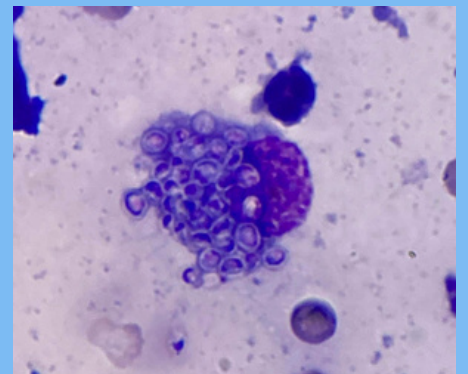


Progressive Respiratory Distress

A 4 yr FS DSH strictly indoor cat presented to the University of Wisconsin in respiratory distress after one week of no response to antibiotics or diuretic therapy. Diagnostics included ultrasonography of the thoracic cavity which revealed a large mass just cranial to the heart and a large volume of fluid in the left hemithorax. Organisms were seen in the pleural fluid and thick walled, broad budding yeast-like organisms were identified in FNA samples of the mass. The urine MVista® *blastomyces* antigen test was positive.

Uveitis & Weight Loss

A male intact DSH kitten originally raised solely indoors from Mexico arrived to Canada at 2 months of age and was maintained indoors. He presented at 4 months of age to a local Vancouver veterinary clinic with a one month history of bilateral uveitis, upper respiratory signs, weight loss, previous fever, mild peripheral lymphadenopathy and mild hepatomegaly. Histoplasmosis organisms were identified on peripheral lymph node cytology. The urine MVista® *histoplasma* antigen test was positive.



Surprisingly "indoor only" does not rule out all infectious diseases including systemic dimorphic fungal mycoses such as cryptococcus, histoplasmosis or blastomycosis.

Patients with fungal infections are often young to middle age, but any age could be affected.



Fungal infection is a consideration in patients that are immunosuppressed, from endemic geographical regions and in patients with lack of expected disease resolution with antibiotic therapy, e.g. non-healing wounds.

Cryptococcus is the most common systemic fungal infection seen in our geographic region. In cats it is uncommonly associated with fever. Organ systems commonly involved include **nasal** (sneezing, discharge, head shaking and stertor), **skin** (single or multifocal nodules with or without ulceration), **nervous** (variable neurologic signs) and **ocular**, (e.g. sudden blindness). Local or generalized **lymphadenopathy** may be noted. Other organ systems can be involved. Almost one quarter of the cats in a California case series were strictly indoor.

Histoplasmosis is endemic in Mexico as well as the Southern states such as Texas and Oklahoma. Recently it has been identified in indoor cats in Colorado and California. Multiple organ involvement is commonly seen in cats, along with concurrent fever, lethargy, weight loss and increased respiratory rate. Oklahoma notes 1/3 of cases in cats are indoors.

Blastomycosis is rare in cats. It is seen in and around the Great Lakes, the St. Lawrence river, as well as the Ohio and Mississippi river valleys. Pulmonary and ocular lesions are noted, but again any organ system could be involved. In one study 18% of the cats were strictly indoors.

References:

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