Proffered Oral

PO1

Histoplasmosis in Israeli Travelers
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Histoplasmosis is one of the more common endemic human mycosis. The majority of infections are acquired in the Americas. We report 23 cases of histoplasmosis in Israeli travelers. All traveled to endemic areas: 22 to Latin America, one to North America. Fourteen cases had visited bat habitats, including 9 who visited a specific cave infested by bats in Lanzarote, Guatemala. Fourteen of the 23 patients were asymptomatic; all presented within 3 months of their return from Latin America. The majority had respiratory symptoms however 28% presented with prolonged febrile illness only.

Asymptomatic patients were diagnosed during the evaluation of incidental radiological findings or because a travel partner had been suspected of Histoplasma infection. These patients were diagnosed 16-120 months after their return from the endemic region.

Serological testing was positive in 75% of symptomatic cases but only 22% of asymptomatic cases.

Histoplasmosis should be considered in travelers returning from Central or South America with respiratory or febrile illness within weeks to months. We report 23 cases of symptomatic histoplasmosis in Israeli travelers. The most common presentation was respiratory symptoms, predominantly cough and dyspnea. Three patients had fever, one had arthritis, and another had abdominal pain. Two patients had skin lesions. The diagnosis was confirmed by positive serology in 75% of cases.

PO2

Occupational Exposure to Aspergillus spp. in Poultry and Swine Feed Production
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Workers from feed production often develop allergic respiratory symptoms and fungi, are likely a significant contributing factor to these symptoms. This study investigated the presence of Aspergillus within feed production facilities and the potential for exposure to workers. Twelve air and twelve surface samples were collected from different locations within the facility, including equipment, floors, and walls. Air samples were collected using a bioaerosol sampler, while surface samples were collected using swabbing methods. The samples were analyzed for the presence of Aspergillus spp. using real-time PCR and culture techniques. The results showed that Aspergillus spp. was detected in all samples collected, indicating high levels of fungal contamination in the feed production facility. The results also showed a correlation between the presence of Aspergillus spp. and the number of workers in the facility, suggesting that increased exposure to these fungi may be related to poor working conditions and lack of proper protective equipment.

PO3

The Fungi: Silent Neighbors or Hidden Threat?
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Introduction
The pathogenicity of fungal rhinosinusitis/FRS was investigated but the relationship of the fungal presence in environment and development of FRS is not yet revealed. We evaluated the relationship of the presence of fungi in sinonasal mucosa with fungal presence in children with their clinical characteristics.

Material and methods
The prospective study with 36 patients with chronic rhinosinusitis/CRS was conducted in the National Reference Medical Mycology Laboratory, Faculty of Medicine, University of Belgrade. Study design included: (i) anamnestic data; (ii) measurements of molds specific IgE and total IgE; (iii) absolute eosinophilic count and skin prick test; (iv) rhinologic and CT observations; (v) mycological finding of sinonasal nasal aspirate and 5 air sampling from the patient’s bedroom.

Results
(i) 10.4% patients with positive molds: 52% Ab had severe forms of CRS with more common presence of NP (p=0.025); (ii) 43.4% of patients with positive molds: Ab had positive fungal finding on nasal mucosa; (iii) in Serbia the prevalence is 1% for allergic FRS/AFRS and 2.8% for FRS; (iv) patients with AFRS had more frequent asthma (p=0.024) and CRS lasting more than 10 years (p=0.000); (v) 225 fungus was found in air samples, the most common were A. fumigatus (57%) and Penicillium sp. (25%).

Conclusion
Fungi amount of fungal spore in the air of patients’ living area should be threat for development of FRS in predisposing patients. Next studies should clarify the mechanism by which airborne fungi turn from "normal flora" into trigger of immunological reactions, resulting in FRS.

PO4

Production of Echinocandins by Fusarium MS-R1
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Fungal infections, especially candidiasis, are on the rise in human populations, leading to a continuous search for novel potential chemicals in order to expand the range of drugs. Filamentous fungi are important sources of bioactive secondary metabolites, many of which are used in medicine. This includes production of anti-fungal metabolites that are used to treat human and animal fungal infections.

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ABSTRACTS

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