

## PARACOCCIDIOIDOMYCOSIS (LUTZ-SPLENDRE-ALMEIDA DISEASE)

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Paracoccidiodomycosis (PCM), a disease caused by *Paracoccidioides brasiliensis*, is the most important deep mycosis in Latin America. Its initial description in Brazil by Adolfo Lutz in 1908 received subsequent contributions, relevant to its understanding, by Splendore and Almeida.

The disease can affect people of all ages, evolving from acute-subacute to chronic forms in children-adolescents and adults 30 years and older, respectively, and manifests itself from benign until severe forms with risk of death. It shows an anatomopathologically granulomatous and suppurative character mainly affecting the lungs, upper airways mucous membranes, mouth, skin, and lymph nodes; however, it can affect all organs and systems.

Its importance relates to social and economic costs, not only from the disease activity, but also by affecting individuals in the most productive phase of life with the establishment of sequels, which represent incapacitation to work. In general, death is the natural history of this disease without specific therapeutic intervention.

It constitutes one of the neglected diseases by all funding agencies for its research and, despite being endemic in Brazil, it is not always considered before the differential diagnosis of lymphadenopathy, infiltrative and nodular-vegetative mucocutaneous lesions, fibrosing pulmonary or systemic diseases with a wide range of onsets from adrenal to serious neurological insufficiencies.

The possibility of PCM should always be considered whenever the differential diagnosis includes tuberculosis and lymphoma, which means valuing clinical epidemiological data (geography of diseases), its main clinical manifestations, and the complementary propaedeutic directed to the anatomopathological analysis of the lesions found.

The knowledge about PCM still requires unravelling relevant aspects of the biology of the fungus, its pathophysiology, less interventionist diagnostic methods, shorter therapy, and proper healing control.

The review presented here represents efforts from the PCM Study Group from the Minas Gerais Federal University (School of Medicine and Biological Sciences Institute) to alert and contribute to the clinical understanding of this important mycosis in the prevalent Brazilian nosology and stimulate its early diagnosis and appropriate therapy.

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