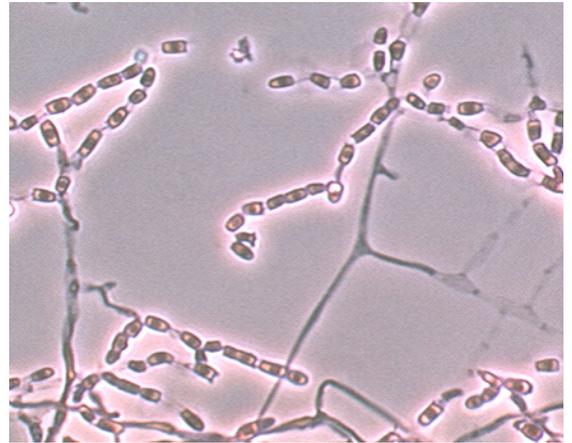


# WHAT IS VALLEY FEVER?

**VALLEY FEVER**, also called coccidioidomycosis or “cocci,” is a disease caused by the *Coccidioides* fungus that grows in the soil and dirt in some areas of California. People and animals can breathe in this fungus from dust in the air in areas where Valley fever is common, including the Central Valley and Central Coast. The fungus can infect the lungs and cause respiratory symptoms, including cough, difficulty breathing, fever, and tiredness or fatigue. In rare cases, Valley fever can spread to other parts of the body and cause severe disease – this type of Valley fever is less common and is called disseminated Valley fever.



In California, the number of reported Valley fever cases has tripled in recent years. The symptoms of Valley fever can sometimes last for weeks or months, causing people who are sick to miss work, school, or prevent them from taking part in activities they enjoy. In some cases, Valley fever can be serious and require medical care at a hospital and even life-long treatment. Valley fever can be fatal.

**ANYONE CAN GET VALLEY FEVER**, including healthy adults and children. Certain groups may be at higher risk of getting Valley fever, especially those who work outdoors or are exposed to dirt and dust outside in areas where Valley fever is common. Other groups may be at higher risk of having severe disease and/or risk of hospitalization if infected. These groups include:

- Older adults (60+ years)
- People who are Black or Filipino
- Pregnant women, especially in the later stages of pregnancy
- People with diabetes
- People with health conditions that weaken the immune system:
  - Cancer
  - Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection
  - Treatment with chemotherapy, steroids, or other medications that affect the immune system
  - Organ transplant



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has created a collection of resources about Valley fever for local partners to use in their outreach to communities impacted by or at risk for Valley fever. For more information and additional resources, visit [CouldBeValleyFever.org](http://CouldBeValleyFever.org).