

# Blastomycosis in Dogs

## Overview

Blastomycosis is a potentially deadly disease that is caused by a fungus found in damp soil where mold is present. This fungus likes wet or damp areas near swamps and lakes; dogs (and humans) who spend a lot of time in areas such as these are most at risk.

A dog can get blastomycosis simply by inhaling the fungus that is hidden in the soil. The fungus travels to the lungs and can then spread to the rest of the body.

## Symptoms

It is important to bring your dog to your veterinarian as quickly as possible if you suspect she has blastomycosis.

Some of the most common signs are:

- [Loss of appetite](#)
- [Coughing](#)
- [Difficulty breathing](#)
- [Fever](#)
- Weight loss
- Blindness and other eye problems
- Draining skin lesions

## Diagnosis

Not every dog that is exposed to this nasty fungus is infected, but those that do become infected need treatment in order to get better. An important aspect in diagnosing this infection is to understand if your pet frequents the type of place that harbors the fungal organism, so providing your veterinarian with a detailed history is important.

Additionally, your veterinarian may recommend running the following tests:

- A skin biopsy (if your dog has skin sores), or a biopsy of other affected tissues/organs, to identify the causative agent
- Urine tests to rule out urinary tract infection and to evaluate the ability of the kidneys to concentrate urine
- Chemistry tests to evaluate kidney, liver, and pancreatic function, as well as sugar levels
- A complete blood count to rule out blood-related conditions

- Electrolyte tests to evaluate hydration status and choose proper fluid supplements, if your pet is dehydrated
- Chest radiographs (x-rays) to evaluate the lungs and heart

## Treatment

If your pet has been diagnosed with blastomycosis, your veterinarian will discuss treatment options with you. This may include antifungal medications and other supportive treatment. Some antifungal drugs have the potential to cause kidney and liver damage, so your veterinarian will want to monitor your dog's chemistry, urinalysis, and other laboratory values during treatment.

## Prevention

Unfortunately, there is no vaccine or effective way to remove the fungus that causes blastomycosis. If you spend time in damp areas, keep an eye on your best friend; if she acts sick or you see any signs that may indicate a [fungal infection](#), contact your veterinarian right away.

*If you have any questions or concerns, you should always visit or call your veterinarian - they are your best resource to ensure the health and well-being of your pets.*