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Expert opinion: what to do when there is Coccidioides exposure in a laboratory.

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Inadvertent exposure to *Coccidioides* species by laboratory staff and others as a result of a mishap is not an uncommon cause of infection in clinical microbiology laboratories. These types of infection may occur in laboratories outside the endemic areas, because the etiologic agent is unexpected in the submitted specimens and because personnel may be unfamiliar with the hazards of dealing with *Coccidioides* species in the laboratory. Coccidioidal infections are often difficult to treat, and outcomes can be poor. Here, we emphasize prevention and an approach to a laboratory accident that minimizes the risk of exposure to laboratory staff and staff in adjacent areas. On the basis of an artificially large exposure to arthroconidia that may occur as a result of a laboratory accident, a conservative approach of close observation and early treatment of exposed staff is discussed.

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