

CDC: 15 US deaths tied to rare tropical fungus

July 22 2010, MIKE STOBBE , AP Medical Writer

(AP) -- U.S. health officials say a fungus usually found in the tropics has taken root in the Pacific Northwest and has been blamed for at least 60 illnesses and 15 deaths.

The fungal illness is still considered rare. But an increasing number of people who have breathed it in have become sick or died. Symptoms include a persistent cough, headache and fever.

The [fungus](#) seems to grow on or around trees. Over the last six years, health officials have tracked 43 cases in Oregon, 15 in Washington, one in California and one in Idaho.

The tally was reported Thursday by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

More information: CDC report: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr>

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