

Rare US fungal meningitis outbreak grows; 5 dead (Update)

October 3 2012, by Mike Stobbe



A sign marks an entrance to Saint Thomas Hospital medical campus in Nashville, Tenn., on Wednesday, Oct. 3, 2012. An outbreak of a rare and deadly form of meningitis that has sickened more than two dozen people was first detected among patients treated at the Saint Thomas Outpatient Neurosurgery Center in the complex. (AP Photo/Erik Schelzig)

(AP)—A fifth person has died in a growing outbreak of a rare form of meningitis that has sickened more than two dozen people in five U.S. states.

Dr. Robert Latham, chief of medicine at Saint Thomas Hospital in Nashville, Tennessee, said Thursday a patient died there late Wednesday or early Thursday.

Tennessee has had three deaths. Deaths have also been reported in

Virginia and Maryland.

People in all the cases received steroid injections used mostly for back pain that have been traced back to a specialty pharmacy in Massachusetts. The pharmacy issued a recall last week and has shut down operations.

The type of meningitis is not contagious. Health officials believe that more new cases are almost certain to appear in the coming days.

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Citation: Rare US fungal meningitis outbreak grows; 5 dead (Update) (2012, October 3) retrieved 23 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-10-rare-meningitis-cases-states-die.html>

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