

## Prevention and Treatment of Infection caused by *Mycobacterium abscessus*

Nishmi Gunasingam\*

Department of Gastroenterology, St Vincent's Hospital, Sydney, Australia

### DESCRIPTION

*Mycobacterium abscessus* is a bacterium that causes tuberculosis and Hansen's disease (Leprosy). It is a type of environmental mycobacteria that can be found in water, soil, and dust. It has been demonstrated that it can contaminate medications and products, including medical devices. *Mycobacterium abscessus* is capable of causing a wide range of infections. This bacterium typically causes infections of the skin and soft tissues beneath the skin. It is also a source of serious lung infections in people with chronic lung diseases like cystic fibrosis. People who have open wounds or who receive injections without proper skin disinfection may be infected with *Mycobacterium abscessus*. Individuals with underlying respiratory conditions or compromised immune systems are at risk of lung infection in rare cases. *Mycobacterium abscessus* is a bacterium that is distantly related to tuberculosis and leprosy.

### Symptoms and diagnosis of *Mycobacterium abscessus*

*Mycobacterium abscessus* infected skin is typically red, warm, tender to touch, swollen, and/or painful. Boils and pus-filled vesicles can form in infected areas. Fever, chills, muscle aches, and a general feeling of illness are other symptoms of *Mycobacterium abscessus* infection. A medical professional should evaluate the infection to see if it is caused by *Mycobacterium abscessus*.

The organism must be cultured from the infection site or, in severe cases, from a blood culture to make a definitive diagnosis. This bacterium is grown in the laboratory from a sample of pus or a biopsy of the infected area to make a diagnosis. When the infection is severe, the bacterium can be isolated from a blood sample and found in the blood. A sample from the infected area and/or blood should be extracted and send to a laboratory for

identification in order to make the diagnosis. It is critical that people who have evidence of infection at a site where they received procedures, such as surgery or injections, should notify their doctors so that the necessary tests can be performed.

### Transmission of *Mycobacterium abscessus*

*Mycobacterium abscessus* can be transmitted in a variety of ways. Infection with *Mycobacterium abscessus* is typically caused by injections of contaminated substances or by invasive medical procedures that use contaminated equipment or material. Infection can also occur as a result of an unintentional injury where the wound is contaminated by soil. Transmission from person to person is extremely unusual.

### CONCLUSION

#### Prevention and treatment of *Mycobacterium abscessus*

Anyone who comes into contact with the infected area should thoroughly wash their hands with soap and water. Following any surgery or medical procedure, patients should follow all instructions given by their healthcare provider. Unlicensed individuals should not be given procedures or injections. *Mycobacterium abscessus* infections are treated by draining pus collections or removing infected tissue and administering the appropriate combination of antibiotics for an extended period of time. The usual antibiotics used to treat skin infections do not usually help with this bacterium's infection. Testing the bacteria against various antibiotics can help doctors determine the best treatment for each patient. Multidrug, macrolide-based therapy offers optimal chance of achieving clinical cure for the disease, preventing the pathogens that are capable of wide spectrum of infections.

**Correspondence to:** Nishmi Gunasingam, Department of Gastroenterology, St Vincent's Hospital, Sydney, Australia, E-mail: astoita@stvincents.com.au

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