



**Northwestern
Health Unit**

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February 16, 2017

Blastomycosis Advisory: Action Required

Northwestern Health Unit is working with Big Grassy First Nation, Health Canada and Public Health Ontario to investigate a cluster of cases of blastomycosis who are residents of Big Grassy First Nation.

More than 10 cases have been lab confirmed in individuals from Big Grassy since mid-December.

Between 2010 and 2015 in Northwestern Health Unit's jurisdiction (Kenora District west of Upsala, and Rainy River District) the number of positive lab tests ranged from 16 to 29 annually, and number of hospitalizations ranged from 14 to 41 annually. Over the 6 year span, the peak months for both hospitalizations and positive lab results were October through December, with a range of 0-6 cases per month.

Actions required:

- Using the accompanying resource as a guide:
 - o Consider blastomycosis as a possible diagnosis, particularly for patients from Big Grassy First Nation
 - o If blastomycosis is suspected, fungal testing is required for diagnosis
 - o Consultation with an Infectious Disease specialist in Winnipeg or Thunder Bay is recommended for treatment

For further information please contact:

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