

Welcome to the Valley Fever Center for Excellence's website. Here we try to provide reliable and timely information about coccidioidomycosis, the medical name for Valley fever. As part of the 2020 Valley Fever Awareness Week activities, I am initiating this "Message from the Center Director" section on our homepage and plan to change it several times per year as new information bears highlighting. Hopefully, this will prove useful to readers.

In the research area, one of the most exciting opportunities has just been announced by Dr. Anthony Fauci's National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease (NIAID). It is a call for proposals to establish centers devoted to studying Valley fever. According to their announcement, NIAID intends to fund three or four centers, selected by competitive scientific review, at different institutions nationally. Each one that is awarded will receive up to \$1.2 million per year for up to five years to pay for research expenses. When infrastructure support to the Centers' Institutions is included, the anticipated commitment by NIAID is about \$30 million over the total period of funding. This is the first time NIAID has directed so many resources to the Valley fever research community. Additionally, as part of the Centers' activities, others new to Valley fever research can apply for seed grants within the Centers and in this way the pool of physicians and scientists working on the Valley fever problem will be increased.

To help the research community develop their proposals in a collaborative way, the Valley Fever Center for Excellence is hosting a Zoom townhall on November 11th. This will be co-moderated by myself, Dr. Royce Johnson of the Kern Valley Fever Institute, and Dr. George Thompson of the University of California at Davis School of Medicine. The townhall is open to all who are interested, although registration is required to participate. Click [HERE](#) to register.

This website and the Valley Fever Awareness Week are just two examples of how the Valley Fever Center for Excellence here at the University of Arizona's College of Medicine-Tucson is trying to bring a greater appreciation of the impact that Valley Fever has on Arizona, California, and the other Western states that have areas endemic for this fungal infection. Recent published financial estimates for Arizona and California indicate that the annual burden of this disease approaches \$1.5 billion. Although Valley fever is a relatively small problem for the United States as a whole, its effect on areas where it exists is similar to that of polio, measles, or chicken pox before these biohazards were controlled by effective vaccines. Residents living with Valley fever should know about its public health impact and support efforts to address it. At the Valley Fever Center for Excellence we are developing better diagnostic tests, more effective treatments, preventative vaccines, and a greater understanding of who is at most risk of serious complications. The Valley Fever Center for Excellence appreciates all who have supported its work over the past 24 years since it was founded, and I welcome future support from any who want to be a part of the solution.

I hope you find this website useful. Please check out our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/ValleyFeverCenterArizona/>. You're also welcome to email any comments to us at vfever@email.arizona.edu.

- John Galgiani MD