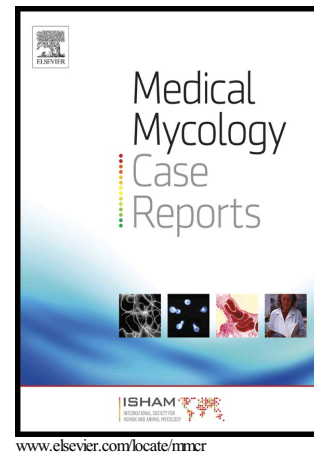


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# Vascular pythiosis of carotid artery with meningitis and cerebral septic emboli: a case report and literature review

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## ABSTRACT

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Vascular Pythiosis caused by *Pythium insidiosum* rarely involves carotid artery. A case of concealed ruptured pseudoaneurysm of the carotid artery with neck abscesses, and cerebral septic emboli is described. Patient presented with large pulsatile neck mass that failed to response to surgery, antifungals and immunotherapeutic vaccine. Residual unresectable disease leads to death in the patient. Pythiosis should be considered as a differential diagnosis of head and neck infection.

### Keywords:

Pythiosis

*Pythium insidiosum*

Carotid artery

Meningitis

Brain

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## 1. Introduction

Human pythiosis is endemic in Thailand, tropical and subtropical area of the world known to cause disease in animal and human [1]. Pythiosis caused by *Pythium insidiosum*, Kingdom Straminipila, Phylum Oomycota known as aquatic fungi [1]. Pythiosis inhabits aquatic area, motile spore act as infective unit which attached to skin and penetrates to deeper layer resulted in several form eg. skin, subcutaneous tissue, cornea, vascular, disseminated form [1, 2]. Risk factor of vascular or disseminated pythiosis included thalassemia, hemoglobinopathy, paroxysmal nocturnal hemoglobiuria, aplastic anemia, leukemia [1]. Pythiosis is a disease that had several challenges in both diagnosis and treatment. Although nowadays, there are several new diagnostic methods such as polymerase chain reaction from direct specimen [3], immunohistochemical staining [4], and serodiagnosis such as enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay [5], hemagglutination test [6], western blotting technique, serum immunodiffusion, immunochromatographic test, the gold standard remains tissue fungal culture which required is a time consuming method [7-10]. Early recognition of pythiosis and confirmed by rapid serodiagnosis could enhance the rapid clinical management for such life threatening disease. Pythiosis had several clinical presentations; vascular form is a life/limb threatening disease, commonly involved medium-to-large-sized arteries of lower extremities resulted in ascending blood vessel infection, aneurysm and thrombosis [1, 11]. Carotid vessel involvement is rare, only one report from literature review [12]. Radical surgery to achieve organism-free margin is the

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