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The role of serum cryptococcal antigen screening in reducing mortality of cryptococcal meningitis in Tertiary Care Hospital, Bangalore

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Risk of Cryptococcal infection is high among HIV with CD4 < 100 cells/mm³. Cryptococcal meningitis implies prolonged hospitalization with a mortality rate of 30-40 and thus high cost. Cryptococcal antigen (CrAg) is detectable in the serum, 3 weeks before symptoms of meningitis appear. Pre-emptive treatment of serum CrAg positive patients with fluconazole and anti-retroviral therapy have shown to improve survival. This period of asymptomatic antigenemia provides an opportunity to prevent fatal cryptococcal disease. Prevalence rates of Cryptococcal infection in asymptomatic to HIV infected patients in India. Hence it is recommended Cryptococcal antigen screening to be included in India's National AIDS Program.

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