

Nocardiosis

Nocardiosis is an [infectious disease](#) affecting either the lungs (pulmonary nocardiosis) or the whole body (systemic nocardiosis). It is due to infection by bacterium of the genus *Nocardia*, most commonly *Nocardia asteroides* or *Nocardia brasiliensis*.

see also [Nocardia farcinica](#).

It is most common in men, especially those with a weakened immune system.

It is one of several conditions that have been called the great imitator.

Cutaneous nocardiosis commonly occurs in immunocompetent hosts.

Nocardiosis of the central nervous system is a challenging and difficult diagnosis for the clinician. The combination of infections of the brain and spinal cord is even more rare.

see [brain nocardiosis](#)

Peeters et al. report on a patient with multiple lesions in the brainstem and cervical spinal cord. This 81-year-old immunocompetent woman presented with symptoms of progressive walking difficulty and ataxia. The results of an extensive workup with laboratory investigation, MRI, lumbar puncture, positron emission tomography (PET), and bone marrow biopsy remained inconclusive. Only after an open biopsy of a cervical lesion by an anterior approach through a partial central corpectomy of the cervical spine, was the diagnosis of nocardiosis made, allowing for specific antibiotic treatment. ¹⁾

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Peeters I, Casselman JW, Vandecasteele SJ, Janssen A, Regaert B, Vantomme N, Vanopdenbosch LJ. Multiple nocardial abscesses of the brainstem and spinal cord diagnosed after an open biopsy through a cervical partial central corpectomy: case report. J Neurosurg Spine. 2015 Sep;23(3):290-3. doi: 10.3171/2014.12.SPINE14755. Epub 2015 Jun 19. PubMed PMID: 26091435.

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