

## **ISHAM Working Group on Filamentous fungi and chronic respiratory infections in cystic fibrosis**

The first meeting of the ISHAM Working Group on Filamentous fungi and chronic respiratory infections in cystic fibrosis will be organized in Angers University, Angers, France, on 7 and 8 June, 2009. Aim is to focus attention on the much overlooked respiratory infections caused by filamentous fungi in patients with cystic fibrosis.

Beside bacteria which remain the major causative agents of respiratory infections in the context of cystic fibrosis (CF), several filamentous fungi may also colonize the respiratory tract of these patients. This fungal colonization of the airways, facilitated by the frequent and prolonged cures of antibiotics and by the use of corticosteroids, may also lead to true respiratory infections whose frequency regularly increases along with the development of lung transplantation and the increase in life expectancy. Apart from *Aspergillus fumigatus*, numerous other species are reported increasingly, such as *Scedosporium apiospermum*, *Aspergillus terreus*, *Exophiala dermatitidis* and *Scedosporium prolificans*, some of them being poorly susceptible to current antifungals and therefore difficult to treat. However, the prevalence of these fungi in the context of CF is certainly underestimated and their clinical significance still remains to be defined. Large scale-multicenter studies should be designed in order to define the real prevalence of these species and the clinical significance of their recovery from respiratory secretions, but also to highlight possible geographic variations in their prevalence and to improve the biological diagnosis of airway colonization/infection. Additionally, numerous questions raise from the colonization of the airways by these filamentous fungi, and basic research on the ecology of these fungi, their biochemistry, and their pathogenic mechanisms should be promoted to define prophylactic measures or to develop more effective antifungal drugs.

The Workshop will be open to anyone who wishes to contribute to the study of chronic respiratory infections caused by filamentous fungi in patients with CF. It will be asked to each attendant to give a short presentation of his or her lab and of the work(s) that has been done in the past few years in our research field. Presentation of scientific projects in this area with search of partners is also encouraged. But a large part of this meeting will also be dedicated to discussions in order to plan future developments and collaborative studies. The number of participants is limited to 50 and there will be no fee.

