ENVIRONMENTAL ISOLATION OF *Cryptococcus neoformans* var. *gattii* AND *Cryptococcus neoformans* var. *neoformans* IN THE CITY OF SÃO PAULO, BRAZIL.

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In order to determine the environmental occurrence of both varieties *of Cryptococcus neoformans* in the City of São Paulo, pigeon droppings and vegetable material from trees of the genus *Eucalyptus* were collected at typically crowded places. Both samples were suspended in sterile physiological saline and shaken. Then, 0.1 ml of the supernatant was plated in Sabouraud dextrose agar and DOPA agar. Suspected colonies were isolated and identified.
A total of 38 sites where large heaps of pigeon droppings could be found were selected downtown for sampling. Pigeon droppings from 8 (21%) of these sites were positive for *C. neoformans* var. *neoformans*. Twelve eucalyptus woods located within four municipal parks were also surveyed; vegetable material from *Eucalyptus* spp. trees were collected monthly over a 2 year period. *C. neoformans* var. *gattii* was recovered from a wood at Ibirapuera Park during the same season on two different occasions (November 1996 and November 1997); this park contained specimens of *Eucalyptus camaldulensis,* a natural habitat of *C. neoformans* var. *gattii. C. neoformans* var. *neoformans* was also detected in a wood from Ibirapuera Park and Aclimação Park.
The results show that both *C. neoformans* var. *neoformans* and *C. neoformans* var. *gattii* are present in the urban environment of São Paulo city, at sites where large numbers of people normally gather.