

What is Naegleria fowleri?

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About Naegleria fowleri:

- It is a **free-living amoeba** or a single-celled living organism.
- It lives in **warm fresh water and soil around** the world, and infects people when it enters the body through the nose.
- Higher temperatures of up to 115°F (46°C) are conducive to its growth and it can survive for short periods in **warm environments**.
- The amoeba can be found in **warm freshwater, such as lakes and rivers**, swimming pools, splash pads, surf parks, or other recreational venues that are poorly maintained or minimally chlorinated.
- It enters the body through the nose, usually when people are swimming. It then travels up to the brain, where it **destroys the brain tissue** and causes swelling.

Key facts about Primary Amoebic Meningoencephalitis

- It is a rare brain infection that is caused by Naegleria fowleri.
- It is also **non-communicable and** people cannot get infected with Naegleria fowleri from drinking water contaminated with the amoeba.
- **Symptoms**

- In the initial stage, the symptoms include **headache, fever, nausea** and vomiting. Later on, the patient may have a stiff neck and experience confusion, seizures, hallucinations and **slip into a state of coma**.
- Most people with PAM die within 1 to 18 days after symptoms begin. It usually leads to coma and death after 5 days.”

- **Treatment**

- There are no effective treatments for the disease yet.
 - At present, doctors treat it with a **combination of drugs**, including amphotericin B, azithromycin, fluconazole, rifampin, miltefosine, and dexamethasone.
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Q1: What is amoeba?

It is a generic term used to refer to a group of single-celled organisms belonging to the biological kingdom Protista. Amoebas are eukaryotic microorganisms that are characterized by their ability to change shape and move using pseudopods, which are temporary extensions of the cell membrane.

Source: What is *Naegleria fowleri* or ‘brain-eating amoeba’, which led to a girl’s death in Kerala?

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/what-is-naegleria-fowleri/>

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