A 33-year-old woman from Zimbabwe with AIDS and a CD4 count of 6 cells/mm³, non-compliant with antiretroviral therapy, presented with severe headaches, vomiting, fevers, and a productive cough. Physical examination revealed tachycardia, a temperature of 39.4°C, clear lungs, and an absence of meningeal signs. Laboratory studies showed a white blood cell count of 4.8 and hemoglobin of 10.1 g/dL. A lumbar puncture was consistent with cryptococcal meningitis (cryptococcal antigen titer 1:32768), and the patient had positive blood cultures growing Cryptococcus neoformans. The admitting chest radiograph was unremarkable.

Amphotericin B and fluocytosine were given. Her repeat lumbar puncture 2 weeks later showed an unchanged cryptococcal antigen titer, and she continued to have high fevers (39.4–40°C) and cough. Tuberculosis was ruled out. A computed tomography scan of the chest, abdomen, and pelvis revealed bilateral multiple moderately enlarged mediastinal and hilar lymphadenopathy, patchy infiltrate in the right lung, and mild hepatomegaly (Fig. 1). Endoscopic ultrasound (EUS) was performed to evaluate the mediastinal lymphadenopathy. Images showed a large heterogeneous hypoechoic mass extending from the subcarinal space to the distal peri-esophageal space (Fig. 2). The mass was sampled by fine-needle aspiration (FNA) biopsy, revealing cryptococcosis and aspergillosis (Fig. 3). The patient then asked to leave the hospital and was placed on oral voriconazole.

Using endoscopic ultrasound-guided fine needle aspiration to diagnose mediastinal cryptococcosis

Endoscopy_UCTN_Code_CCL_1AF_2AC

Competing interests: None

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Endoscopy 2011; 43: E304–E305
© Georg Thieme Verlag KG Stuttgart · New York · ISSN 0013-726X

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