**BACKGROUND**

*Pneumocystis* is a genus of fungi which can be pathogenic in mammals. *Pneumocystis carinii*, also referred to as *Pneumocystis jiroveci*, is a microscopic fungus that exists in the lungs of many humans. This fungus is normally benign, but it can cause *Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia (PCP) in immunocompromised individuals. During PCP, *Pneumocystis carinii* deteriorates the basement membrane of the lung, causing a rise in LDH levels and compromising gas exchange. Oxygen is less able to diffuse into the blood, leading to hypoxia, which, along with high arterial CO2 levels, stimulates ventilation, thereby causing dyspnea. The fungus can also invade other visceral organs, such as the liver, spleen and kidney. Symptoms of *Pneumocystis carinii* infection include shortness of breath, non-productive cough, low grade fever, weight loss and night sweats. This disease can be fatal if not treated aggressively.

**REFERENCES**


**SOURCE**

*Pneumocystis carinii* (SPM365) is a mouse monoclonal antibody raised against *Pneumocystis carinii* isolated from human lung.