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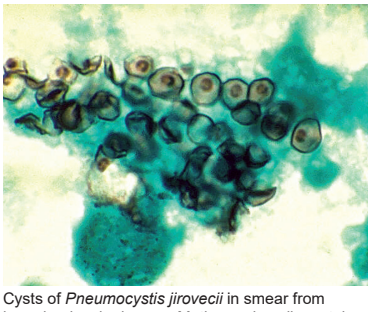
etymologia

Pneumocystis jirovecii [noo"mo-sis'tis ye"ro-vet'ze]

Ronnie Henry

A genus of unicellular fungi, *Pneumocystis* was likely originally described by Carlos Chagas in 1909 in guinea pigs, although he confused it with a trypanosome and placed it in a new genus, *Schizotrypanum*. In 1912, Delanoë and Delanoë at the Pasteur Institute published the first description of the new organism as unrelated to trypanosomes and proposed the species name *P. carinii i*n honor of Antonio Carini.

Human *Pneumocystis* infections were first reported in 1942 by van der Meer and Brug, but not until 1976 did Frenkel report different morphologic and physiologic characteristics of human and rat *Pneumocystis* isolates. He proposed the name *P. jirovecii* in honor of Czech parasitologist Otto Jírovec, who reported *Pneumocystis* as a cause of interstitial pneumonia in infants, although this name change was not accepted by researchers at the time. When *Pneumocystis* was reclassified from a protozoan to a fungus, the naming convention shifted from the International Code of Zoological Nomenclature to the International Code of Botanical Nomenclature, and the species epithet was modified from *jiroveci* to *jirovecii*.



Cysts of *Pneumocystis jirovecii* in smear from bronchoalveolar lavage. Methenamine silver stain. CDC/Dr. Russell K. Brynes

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