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## **ABC NEWS' 'START HERE' PODCAST DELVES INTO THE GROWING THREAT OF FUNGAL INFECTIONS ON A SPECIAL EDITION POSTING FRIDAY, MARCH 15**

**Special Features Interviews With Former NFL Star Rob Gronkowski, CDC Chief Fungus Expert Dr. Tom Chiller, Infectious Disease Specialist Dr. John Galgiani and a Young Mother Who Suffered for Months Due to a Fungal Infection**

ABC News' flagship daily podcast "Start Here," in partnership with the ABC News Medical Unit, will run a special edition reporting on the escalating dangers posed by fungal infections on **FRIDAY, MARCH 15**.

Fungi live all around us, from soil and water to the air we breathe. For the most part, it is harmless, but in certain circumstances, it can become deadly. According to a study in the journal *Microbial Cell*, fungal infections kill an estimated 1.7 million people worldwide each year, including thousands of people in the United States. Now, driven by climate change, population growth and drug resistance, the danger is growing.

"I was blown away by this reporting when the ABC News Medical Unit brought it to our attention," said Brad Mielke, host and managing editor of "Start Here." "The scope of this goes beyond one state or one type of infection. It's about how a changing climate is literally reshaping what our bodies will be exposed to in the coming years. If the goal of 'Start Here' is to identify stories that are affecting the world today, this seemed like a natural fit for a special edition."

This special edition of "Start Here" is reported by ABC News' Sony Salzman and features interviews with former NFL star Rob Gronkowski, who shares his personal connection to this topic, as well as the CDC's chief of the Mycotic Diseases branch, Dr. Tom Chiller; infectious disease specialist Dr. John Galgiani, who is helping develop the first-ever fungal vaccine; and Allison Karsh, a mom of two living in Arizona, who spent weeks desperately searching for answers to a wide range of symptoms before finally learning she was suffering from valley fever from a fungus. She received her diagnosis from Dr. Galgiani.

"Start Here" is available now for free on all major podcast platforms, including Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Amazon Music, iHeartRadio, Pandora, TuneIn, Audacy and the ABC News app.

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like "The Dropout," "Reclaimed: The Story of Mamie Till-Mobley," and "In Plain Sight: Lady Bird Johnson."

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