2
Immune Responses to Fungal Infections

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2.1 INTRODUCTION

Fungi do not rank with bacteria, viruses or protozoa as causes of human disease. Mycoses are generally associated with morbidity rather than mortality and, since they are not notifiable, accurate data on their prevalence are almost unobtainable. In addition, countries where mycoses are believed to be of major public health significance are not necessarily those where expertise in mycological diagnosis, management and reporting are available.

Fungi can nevertheless cause much suffering, and ringworm infections involving skin are amongst the commonest infectious diseases occurring in some parts of the world. Hammerman et al.\textsuperscript{1} have estimated that in the United States mycoses are annually responsible for 300–400 deaths, for over 8 700 hospital admissions and for the outlay of over $900 000 in costs.

Establishment of infection by a pathogenic fungus is almost always