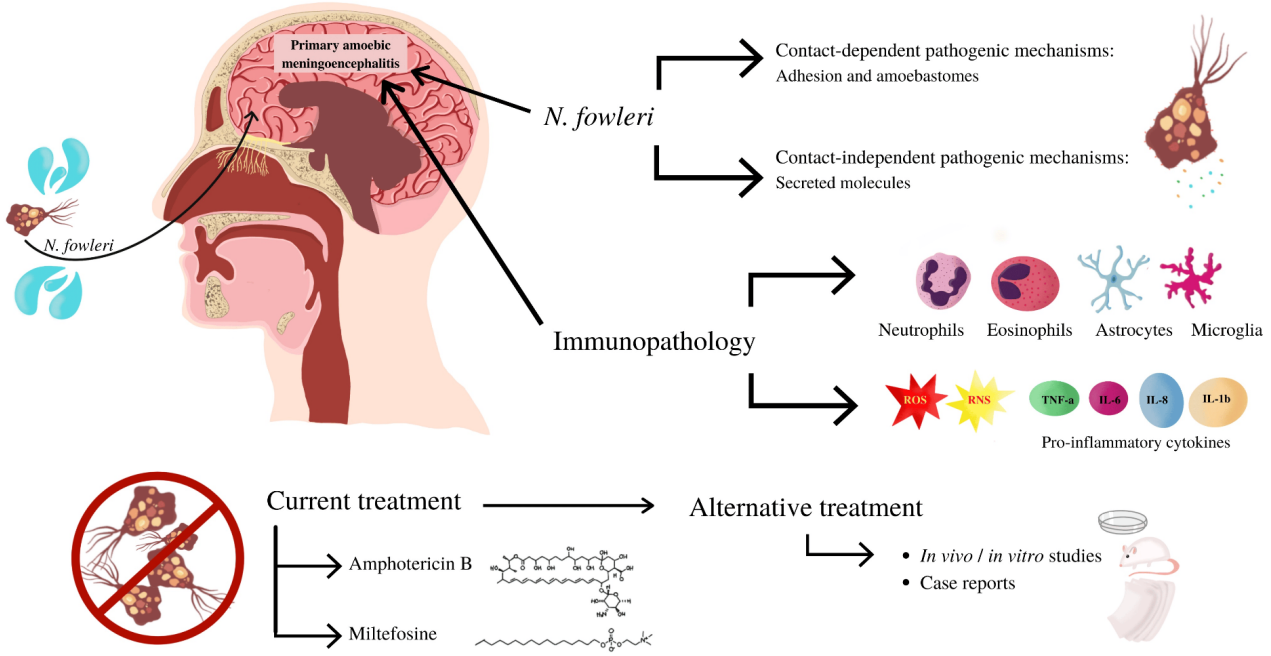
Brain-eating Amoeba

Source: IE

The recent death of a 5-year-old girl in Kerala due to ***primary amoebic meningoencephalitis (PAM)*** caused by the **Naegleria fowleri amoeba**, often referred to as the **"brain-eating amoeba,"** has highlighted the **rare yet fatal nature** of this devastating infection.

- ***Naegleria fowleri*** is a free-living amoeba that thrives in **warm freshwater and soil** around the world.
    - The amoeba enters the body through the nose, typically during activities like swimming, and then travels to the brain, where it destroys brain tissue and causes swelling.
- **Symptoms:** The initial symptoms include **headache, fever, nausea, and vomiting,** followed by a stiff neck, confusion, seizures, hallucinations, and eventually coma.
- **Mortality Rate:** Most people with **PAM die within 1 to 18 days** after the onset of symptoms, and the disease usually leads to coma and death within 5 days.
- **Treatment Challenges:** There is currently **no effective treatment for PAM,** and doctors rely on a combination of drugs, including amphotericin B, azithromycin, fluconazole, and others, to try to manage the infection.

//



Read More: Naegleria fowleri: The Brain-Eating Amoeba

PDF Refernece URL: https://www.drishtiias.com/printpdf/brain-eating-amoeba-1