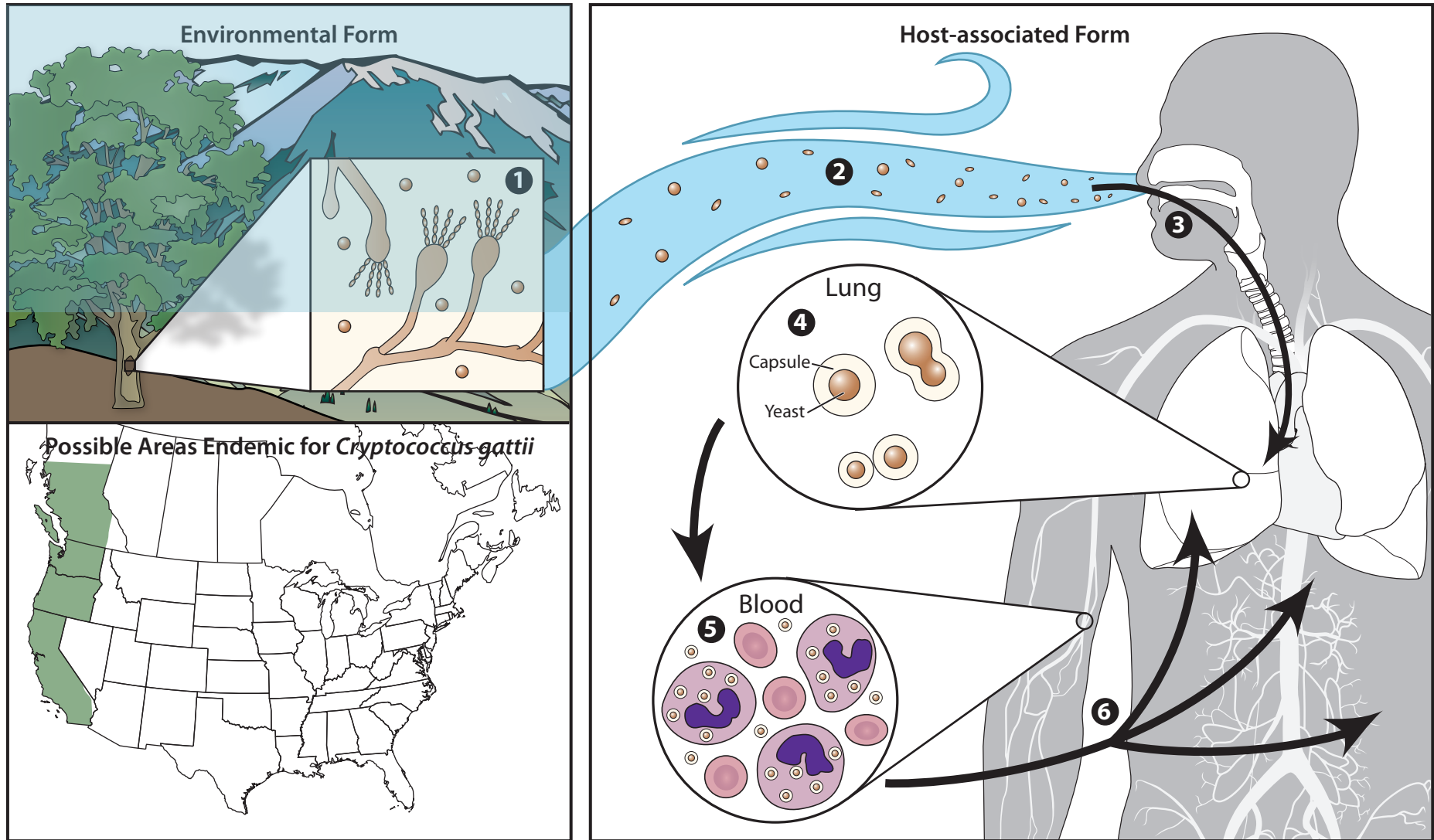


# Biology of *Cryptococcus gattii*



*Cryptococcus gattii* lives in the environment (1), usually in association with certain trees or soil around trees. Humans and animals can become infected with *C. gattii* after inhaling airborne, dehydrated yeast cells or spores (2), which travel through the respiratory tract and enter the lungs of the host (3). The small size of the yeast and/or spores allows them to become lodged deep in the lung tissue. The environment inside the host body signals *C. gattii* to transform into its yeast form, and the cells grow thick capsules to protect themselves (4). The yeasts then divide and multiply by budding. After infecting the lungs, *C. gattii* cells can travel through the bloodstream (5)—either on their own or within macrophage cells— to infect other areas of the body, typically the central nervous system (6).