

200 Mold, (Odor & Bacteria) Related Illnesses and Health Complaints, both Medical and Anecdotal

Alphabetic Index

A

- abdominal pain
- abnormal pap smears
- acid reflux
- acne
- allergy symptoms (wide variety of)
- mild to severe and from transitory to chronic - Ref: Middleton and assoc.
- Allergic bronchiopulmonary Aspergillosis - worsening of underlying asthma or cystic fibrosis, coughing up blood, weight loss - uncommon
- Allergic Rhinitis and asthma are associated with responses mediated by immunoglobulin E (IgE)
- altered immunity
- anaphylaxis
- apnea, sleep
- Aspergilloma (fungal growth in lung), cough, coughing up blood, weight loss. Uncommon.
- asthma and asthmatic signs
- asthma, adult onset
- asthma, sudden onset, any age
- asthma, increased symptoms or renewal of previously diminished symptoms
- Asthma due to fungal allergens: chest tightness, wheezing, cough, dyspnea. Worsens w/ exposure. Cx typically occur within 1 hr of exposure

B

- balance, loss of
- bladder and kidney pain
- bleeding lungs
- blood pressure irregularities
- body aches and muscle pains
- boils on skin, especially neck, especially following disturbance of moldy materials (*S. chartarum*) (photos on file)
- breathing difficulties
- Bronchopulmonary aspergillosis / allergic bronchopulmonary aspergillosis: inflammatory disease caused by immunologic response *Aspergillus sp.*, usually *A. fumigatus*, growing in bronchi of asthmatics reported in immunocompromised patients and patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and has been linked to building-related illness (BRI)

- bruising easily
- burning mouth
- burning eyes
- burning throat
- burning lungs

C

- cancer
- candida, systemic
- Chronic Candidiasis FAQ - see Dr. Fungus:
doctorfungus.org/mycoses/human/candida/Chronic_Candidiasis.htm
- central nervous system disorders (CNS)
- chest pain associated with excessive coughing
- chills
- choking
- cholesterol or triglycerides unusual variations
- chronic fatigue syndrome (CFS)
- chronic sinus infections
- coated tongue
- coccidioidomycosis
- colds, recurrent
- constipation
- cough, dry hacking
- coughing up blood
- cryptococcosis

D

- dandruff resistant to usual treatments
- dark urine
- death in extreme cases (humans, other animals)
- depression
- Dermatitis: red, itchy skin, rashes
- diarrhea
- difficulty concentrating
- difficulty in swallowing
- dirt-like taste in mouth
- disorientation
- dizziness

E

- endometriosis

- eye infections, (beware of undiagnosed fungal eye infections), loss of vision
- eye irritation

F

- face flushing intermittent
- facial movements, unexplained twitching
- farmers' lung disease
- fevers
- fibrous discharge from the nose, nasal fibers, mucosa - (See Morgellon's syndrome or Morgellon's disease below)
- fibromyalgia - numerous websites and articles discuss possible connections between mold exposure and Fibromyalgia
- flu-like symptoms: WARNING: flu-like symptoms can be a sign of potentially fatal carbon monoxide poisoning! Immediate help may be required.
- food allergies
- frequent bloody noses
- frequent infections
- fungal infections, systemic such as histoplasmosis, coccidioidomycosis, and cryptococcosis, responding to contaminated bird droppings or construction dusts

G

- Glucan sensitivity: Glucans are glucose polymers that are components of most fungal cell walls, and exposure to airborne 1,3-beta-D-glucan has been known to cause irritation symptoms due to airway inflammation (7). However, these irritant effects are transient and self-limiting

H

- hair loss
- headaches
- heart attack
- Hypersensitivity Pneumonitis - (Extrinsic Allergic Alveolitis) - tightness of chest, difficulty breathing, cough, fever, muscle aches, reactions occur 6-8 hrs after exposure. - Uncommon.
- hemorrhagic pneumonitis
- Extrinsic Allergic Alveolitis - (Hypersensitivity Pneumonitis) -
- heartburn
- histoplasmosis
- hives
- hypersensitivity to airborne allergens or house dust
- hypersensitivity to mold

- hypersensitivity pneumonitis, associated with T-cell responses and responses mediated by immunoglobulin G (IgG). hypersensitivity pneumonitis is characterized by recurrent symptoms of fever, cough, and chest tightness and the presence of pulmonary infiltrates on a chest radiograph. Chronic hypersensitivity pneumonitis features progressive dyspnea, fatigue, interstitial pneumonitis, and pulmonary fibrosis (Farmer's lung)

I

- immune system deterioration, decreased resistance
- immune related illnesses
- indigestion
- infertility
- invasive pulmonary aspergillosis - pneumonia, fever, bone pain, chills - occurs in immunocompromised patients - uncommon
- irritation: aggravated existing allergic rhinitis or asthma
- irritability
- irritable bowel syndrome
- itching skin, eye, nose, mouth

J

- judgment, loss of ability to think clearly and make decisions

K

- kidney pain and failure

L

- learning difficulties
- leaky gut syndrome
- liver pain
- long lasting flu-like symptoms

M

- memory loss
- menopause, unanticipated onset
- metallic taste in mouth
- migraine headaches
- mood swings, sudden

- Morgellon's syndrome or Morgellon's disease: symptoms including fibers in nasal secretions
fibers in skin and scalp particles or scrapings - skin lesions
- mucous accumulation on back of the throat
- multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS)
- mycosis - various mycoses ascribed to mold exposure including
 - Aspergillosis
 - Blastomycosis
 - Candidiasis
 - Coccidioidomycosis
 - Cryptococcosis
 - Histoplasmosis
 - Paracoccidiomycosis
 - Sporotrichosis
 - Zygomycosis
 - also see Trichothecene poisoning (below)
- mycotoxicosis - Mycotoxins, which typically are cytotoxic, disrupt cell membranes and interfere with the synthesis of protein, RNA, and DNA The only well-documented human mycotoxicoses have been the result of ingestion rather than inhalation
- also see Trichothecene poisoning (below)

N

- nasal discharge, green slime, fungus, mucous, other (See Morgellon's syndrome or Morgellon's disease above)
neck boils or round rash spots (see online photos)
- night sweats and hot flashes
- nose irritation
- nosebleeds
- numbness in face and limb

O

- odors, increased sensitivity
- Pungent odors may initiate avoidance reactions, a generalized feeling of discomfort, breath holding, and a burning sensation on the skin
- open skin sores and lacerations
- open sores on head
- organic dust toxic syndrome

P

- peripheral nervous system effects
- personality changes

- pets, sudden odd behavior, aggressiveness, disorientation, running in circles, stumbling, falling, respiratory disorder, sudden death, including death of pets due to pulmonary hemorrhaging [area of ongoing research by DJF - web author]
See: circling disease in sheep.
- pets, Cryptococcosis of Cats
- poor appetite
- puffy or droopy eyes
- Pulmonary hemorrhaging:
Stachybotrys chartarum (*S. atra*) is a large sticky spore not easily made airborne. *Stachybotrys* mycotoxin was thought to cause acute pulmonary hemorrhage and death in infants, but the CDC has stated that the association has not been proved).
About 10 ng of mycotoxins are produced for every 1 million mold spores [Probably widely variable from zero to high numbers based on environmental variables as well as species variation--DF].
Assuming the exposure is cumulative, inhalation of 10⁹ spores per hour would be required for toxic effects. [This is a very low level and easily obtained in circumstances where occupants are exposed to moldy building materials during demolition or cleaning.-- DJF]
Therefore, [in the opinion of some experts--DF] it is unlikely that inhalation of fungal parts presumed to contain mycotoxins could produce significant human illness--particularly in a nonagricultural setting.

QR

- rashes
- redness of eyes
- respiratory distress
- rhinitis
- ringing in ears
- runny nose

S

- seizures
- smells, increased sensitivity to
- spleen pain
- shortness of breath (see Asthma, COPD, respiratory disorders)
- sinus congestion
- sinusitis, chronic
- skin rashes or irritation
- skin redness
- sleep disorders
- slurred speech or verbal dysfunction (trouble in speaking)
- sneezing fits
- spitting up or vomiting mucous

- swollen glands
- swollen lymph nodes
- Syndromes, mold-related
 - Chromoblastomycosis
 - Eye Infections
 - Lobomycosis
 - Mycetoma
 - Nail, Hair, and Skin disease
 - Onychomycosis (Tinea unguium)
 - Piedra
 - Pityriasis versicolor
 - Tinea barbae
 - Tinea capitis
 - Tinea corporis
 - Tinea cruris
 - Tinea favosa
 - Tinea nigra
 - Tinea pedi
- Otomycosis
- Phaeohyphomycosis
- Rhinosporidiosis
- Systemic candida infection

T

- Throat irritation
- Tightness in the chest (this can be a common symptom of many complaints including mold-triggered asthma attacks)
- Tinea: most common fungal disease is this superficial mycosis, not linked to IAQ/building-related illness
- Tremors (shaking)
- Trichothecene poisoning (Alternate names: Mycotoxins, T2, Yellow rain) - possibly related to mycotoxin exposure from some molds.
The US CDC offers lab criteria for diagnosis of Trichothecend poisoning including:
 - Biologic: Selected commercial laboratories are offering immunoassays to identify trichothecenes or trichothecene-specific antibodies in human blood or urine (2, 3). However, these procedures have not been analytically validated and are not recommended.
 - Environmental: Detection of trichothecene mycotoxins in environmental samples, as determined by FDA.
 - References for poisoning by mycotoxins, T2, Yellow Rain, or Trichothecenes:
Clinical Guide to Bioweapons and Chemical Agents, Vincent E. Friedewald, Springer, London, ISBN 978-1-84628-787-9 (online),

Trichothecene poisoning is discussed in depth at the US CDC website where the following references are also provided:

- Wannemacher RW Jr, Wiener SL. Trichothecene mycotoxins. In: Zajtchuk R, Bellamy RF, eds. Textbook of military medicine: medical aspects of chemical and biologic warfare. Washington, DC: Office of the Surgeon General at TMM Publications, Borden Institute, Walter Reed Army Medical Center; 1997:655-77.
- Croft WA, Jastromski BM, Croft AL, Peters HA. Clinical confirmation of trichothecene mycotoxicosis in patient urine. J Environ Biol 2002;23:301-20.
- Vojdani A, Thrasher HD, Madison RA, Gray MR, Heuser G, Campbell AW. Antibodies to molds and satratoxin in individuals exposed in water-damaged buildings. Arch Environ Health. 2003;58:421-32.
- Tuomi T, Reijula K, Johnsson T, et al. Mycotoxins in crude building materials from water-damaged buildings. Appl Environ Microbiol 2000;66:1899-904.
- US CDC: "Case Definition: Trichothecene Mycotoxin"

U

- unexplained fevers
- upper respiratory symptoms (eg, nasal congestion, sinus headache, episodic dyspnea)
- urinary tract infection (UTI)

V

- vaginal yeast infections - see Women' health problems (below)
- vertigo or dizziness
- VOC sensitivity:
 - volatile organic chemicals may reach levels sufficient to produce central nervous system symptoms such as headache, inability to concentrate, or dizziness
- vomiting (nausea)

WXYZ

- weakness, loss of strength
- wheezing breath
- women's health problems, nonspecific
 - yeast infections, vaginal, (other?) symptoms: Vaginal. Recurrent episodes of Candida vaginitis associated with the classic symptoms of pruritus, burning and abnormal discharge.
 - Gastrointestinal. Heartburn, bloating, diarrhea or constipation.
 - Respiratory allergy. Rhinitis, sneezing and/or wheezing.

- Central nervous system. Anxiety, depression, memory deficits and/or loss of ability to concentrate.
- Menstrual abnormalities. Severe premenstrual tension and/or menstrual irregularities.
- Other Systemic Symptoms.
- Fatigue, headache and/or irritability.

Technical Reviewers & References

InspectAPedia.com[®] - [Daniel Friedman](#)

Additional technical contributors & reference sources for this article are listed below.

MOLD TEST PROCEDURES

MOLD TESTING METHOD VALIDITY

1. Identifying Filamentous Fungi, A Clinical Laboratory Handbook, Guy St-Germain, Richard Summerbell, Star Publishing, 1996, ISBN 0-89863-177-7
2. Fundamentals of Diagnostic Mycology, F. Fisher, N.Cook, W.B. Saunders, 1998, ISBN 0-7216-5006-6
3. Atlas of Clinical Fungi, 2nd Ed., G.S. de Hoog, J. Guarro, J. Gene & M.J. Figueras, Centraalbureau voor Schimmelcultures, Utrecht, The Netherlands, 2000 ISBN 90-70351-43-9.
4. InspectAPedia.com/sickhouse/bibliog.htm contains a more extensive reference list.

Sources for Mold Related Illness List Contents

- <http://InspectAPedia.com/sickhouse.htm> - DJ Friedman's anecdotal reports of client's self-reported complaints
- <http://www.doctorfungus.org/> online mycology reference
- http://www.postgradmed.com/issues/2003/06_03/fung.htm
- postgraduate medicine online <http://www.moldinspector.com/> (informative site, sells books about mold)
- <http://www.cleanwaterpartners.org/mold/related-illnesses.html> (Environmental Law Firm site)
- <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/ohb/HESIS/molds.pdf> California DHS "Molds in Indoor Workplaces"