

Yoon Nofsinger, M.D.  
Tampa ENT Associates, 3450 East Fletcher Avenue, Tampa, FL 33613  
Phone (813) 972-3353, Fax (813) 978 3667

**MOLDS: WHERE ARE THEY FOUND?**

Penicillium: Colonies of this fungus are often blue or green in color, and may be seen on food or other organic materials (citrus fruits, jams, bread, apples, leather) in the home. The spores are plentiful inside houses during the winter, and show up at the highest levels around 2pm.

Hormodendrum: This type of spore is very common in the air, sometimes making up half of the total spore count. The highest levels occur mid-summer through December, and the daily peak of spore counts is between 11am and 3pm. The fungus grows on organic debris in the soil and on dead leaves of some plants.

Aspergillus: This is a common soil fungus, and also grows on stored food products under damp conditions. One species is common on wet surfaces in bathrooms and in drip pans of refrigerators and other appliances.

Alternaria: This type of spore is very common in the air from late spring into fall, especially from noon until 3pm, daily. The fungus grows on organic debris in the soil and also parasitizes leaves, stems, flower, and fruits of many vegetables, cereal grains, and ornamental plants (such as tomato, bean, chrysanthemum, and cabbage).

Helminthosporium: These spores are fairly common in the air, especially those produced by leaf parasites of grasses and cereal grains. Grain threshing operations release large quantities of these spores into the air. The daily peak of spore production in nature is around 2pm.

Fusarium: Spores are often produced in a slimy mass, and require water splashing for their dispersal, thus they may be very common in the air after the rain. Many fusarium species are parasitic on vegetable and field crops, and spores may be released from infected grasses and cereals and from stored fruits and vegetables, such as cucumbers, tomatoes, and potatoes.

Stemphyllium: This fungus parasitizes leaves and stems of vegetables crops (such as tomatoes and beans) and may be common in the air during the daytime in the summer months. The spores are produced individually on branches formed by the fungus.

Rhizopus: This fungus is a common saprophyte, growing on organic debris in soil and on sugary food products in storage (bakery goods, fruits and sweet potatoes).

Curvularia: This fungus is a common parasite of grasses, and the spores are easily dispersed into the air by lawn mowing activity. In nature, the highest concentration of spores in the air occurs in the early afternoon.

Cephalosporium: The spores are produced by this fungus in a slime droplet, and usually require water splashing for dispersal, thus they may be especially common in the air after a rain. Colonies growing saprophytically on organic debris on the soil are probably the main source of airborne spores; a similar type of spore is produced by cephalosporium species associated with wilt diseases of trees.

Nigrospora: Branches of this growth end with jar-shaped cells which bear the black spores. The jar-shaped cell apparently swells up and explodes, propelling the black spore into the air like a tiny cannon ball. These spores are released daily between 11am and 1pm during the growing season. The fungus grows saprophytically on organic debris in the soil.

Pullularia: The spores are the most plentiful in the air during the afternoon (1-5pm). The fungus colonies have a slimy, yeast-like appearance because of the numerous spores which are budded off the low-growing, dark, swollen branches of the fungus growth.