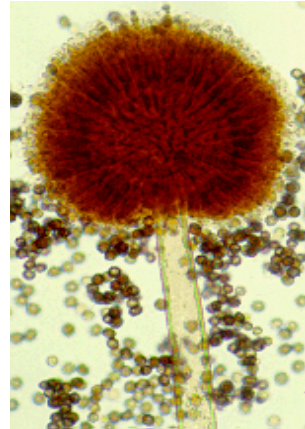


Mold of the Month: December 2005

Aspergillus niger



Culture of *Aspergillus niger*.



Conidial head of *A. niger*.

Colony Description

Colonies consist of a compact white or yellow mycelium covered by a dense layer of dark-brown to black conidial heads. Reverse is uncolored or pale yellow.

Microscopic Morphology

Conidial heads are large, globose, dark brown. Conidiophore's stipe is smooth-walled, hyaline or turning dark towards the vesicle. Conidial heads are biserial with the phialides borne on brown metulae. Conidia are globose to subglobose, dark brown to black and rough-walled in chain.

Ecology

Cosmopolitan, isolated mainly from soils, seeds, dried fruits and decomposing plant material. *A. niger* is one of the most commonly reported fungi from food and indoor environments.

Clinical Significance

This is the third most common species associated with invasive pulmonary aspergillosis. It is also often a causative agent of aspergilloma and is the most frequently encountered agent of otomycosis. It is often isolated in cases of chronic otitis where generally, it colonizes only the outer ear canal. It produces Ochratoxin A.