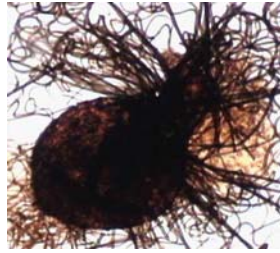


Mold of the Month – May 2006

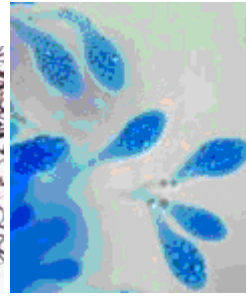
Chaetomium sp.



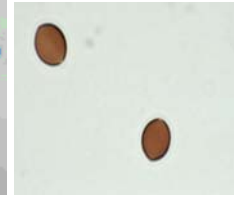
Chaetomium sp. culture



Perithecia



Asci



Ascospores

Colony Description

Chaetomium sp. grows rapidly and the texture is cottony. The surface color of the colony is white at the beginning and becomes grey to olivaceous. It produces perithecia that appear as olive, brown or black dots on the surface of the colony. Reverse is pale yellow to olive brown.

Microscopic Morphology

Hyphae are septate, hyaline to pale brown. Perithecia are round, oval, or flask-shaped, olive, brown or black, surrounded by long, helical or erect, filamentous appendages. Asci are stalked or club shaped, contain 4-8 spores. Ascospores are oval or lemon shaped, single celled, usually brown.

Ecology

Chaetomium sp. is a cosmopolitan fungus. It is commonly isolated from soil, seeds, decomposing plant matters (especially woody or straw-like materials) as well as from herbivore dung. Widespread in indoor environment especially on cellulolytic materials and very commonly found on damp sheetrock paper. It is also common in air samples.

Clinical Significance

Some report indicated that it causes Type I allergies (hay fever, asthma) but that is not well studied. A very uncommon agent of onychomycosis (nail infection). *C. globosum* produces Chaetoglobosins mycotoxin. Sterigmatocystin mycotoxin is produced by other species.