

Epicoccum

(*Epicoccum nigrum*)

Epicoccum nigrum is a saprophytic (lives on dead or decaying organic matter) mold that has world-wide distribution. Outdoors, it can be found in the soil, on canvas and cotton, and on any decaying vegetation. Indoors, *Epicoccum* has been isolated from carpets, wood flooring, mattress dust and even exposed acrylic paint.

Epicoccum is frequently reported in air samplings. Studies have found 20 – 30% of atopic (having a predisposition to have allergies) patients had a positive test result to *Epicoccum*. Numerous allergenic proteins have been identified from *Epicoccum*.

Like most molds, *Epicoccum* does best in warmer, damp environments. While the spores are frequently found in home air sampling, steps can be taken to minimize exposure to indoor molds.

