

A. Niger

(*Aspergillus niger*)

Aspergillus niger is a common saprophytic (lives off of dead or decaying organic matter) mold. It is found on stored grains, in the soil, dead leaves and compost piles. It produces very high numbers of spores, or conidia, and becomes airborne readily with any disruption. These spores are found indoors frequently, and they are remarkably tolerant of temperature extremes.

Aspergillus niger spores have been isolated from house dust, dried fruits, nuts and seeds and even on the thorns of rose bushes! Industrially, *A. niger* is important as it is capable of decomposing plastic and cellulose. While *A. niger* is not as prevalent in the human environment as *A. fumigatus*, it should be considered as an important trigger of allergy and asthma.

Like most molds, *A. niger* is virtually impossible to avoid. However you can take steps to minimize the exposure in your environment.

