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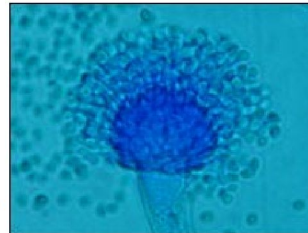
ON THIS DAY

EDITORS' BLOG

Deadly fungus gene code cracked

Scientists have cracked the genetic code of a fungus responsible for deadly infections and allergic reactions.

Aspergillus fumigatus, which causes more infections than any other mould, is particularly dangerous to people with weakened immune systems.



Aspergillus fumigatus can be deadly

Researchers at the Institute for Genomic Research hope their work could lead to better diagnostic tests, and treatments for fungal infections.

Their international collaboration is reported in the journal Nature.

Experts believe that *A. fumigatus* has become an increasing threat in recent years as more people with compromised immune systems are surviving.

“ This study does for the first time start to give an indication of why such closely related species in nature can have such different effects ”
Dr Paul Dyer

These include transplant patients, and people with leukaemia and Aids.

The fungus also appears to trigger asthma in some people with particularly sensitive immune systems.

It is unusual because it can thrive at a wide range of temperatures, from 70C - the temperature in a compost heap - to 37C, inside the human body.

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