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Gardener killed by fungus in his compost

A keen gardener died after contracting a rare lung infection from the compost he spread on his garden.

By Kate Devlin, Medical Correspondent

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Just a day after he raked the rotten leaves and plants over his garden the 47-year old man was admitted to hospital complaining of chest pains and a shortness of breath. Less than four days later he was dead.

Doctors believe that he contracted the infection by inhaling fungus spores which had grown among the dead leaves during storage.

His death has prompted a warning to other gardeners about the dangers of compost.

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Writing in the Lancet medical journal, Dr David Waghorn, who treated the man at Wycombe Hospital in Buckinghamshire in May last year, warns that the condition is rare "but may be considered an

occupational hazard for gardeners".

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