

Torula

Mitosporic ("mitosis" and "sporic") fungus. Hyphomycetes.

Characteristics

Distribution

Found most frequently in temperate regions. Approx. 8 species.

Where Found

Soil, dead herbaceous stems, wood, grasses, sugar beet root, groundnuts, and oats. One species is thermophilic (thrives in high heat).

Mode of Dissemination

Dry spore. Wind.

Growth Indoors

Found indoors on cellulose containing materials such as jute, old sacking, wicker, straw baskets, wood, and paper.

Industrial Uses

Not known.

Other Comments

Nomenclatural problems: Torula is sometimes confused with the yeast Torulopsis. Torulosis is an old name for cryptococcosis, a disease in humans caused by the yeast *Cryptococcus neoformans*.

Potential Health Effects

Allergens

Type I allergies (hay fever, asthma).

Potential Opportunist or Pathogen

No reports of human infection.

Potential Toxin Production

Torula herbarium was cytotoxic in screening tests performed by our laboratory. The nature of the toxin(s) is unknown.

Laboratory Notes

Growth/Culture Characteristics

Grows vegetatively on general fungal media but usually requires specialized media for sporulation.

Spore Trap Recognition

Distinctive, not easily confused with other genera.

Tape Lift Recognition

Distinctive, readily identifiable on tape samples.

