

MOLD and HUMAN ILLNESS: One Epidemiologist's View

By

J. Donald Millar, MD, DTPH (Lond.)

DON MILLAR & Associates, Inc.

Murrayville, GA

MOLD and HUMAN ILLNESS

- Introduction
- Path of the Proselyte
- Credo: What I Believe
- The Way Out is Through
- Conclusion

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Path of the Proselyte: Early

- First Exposures
- NIOSH
- Cleveland
- AIHA Workshop

Path of the Proselyte: Early

■ First Exposures:

- ◆ Blackfoot Fungus Ball
- ◆ Histo Epidemic

■ NIOSH:

- ◆ Hazard Evaluations
- ◆ NIOSH/EPA Guide

Path of the Proselyte: Early

- **Cleveland:**

- ◆ “Killer Mold” 1993

- **AIHA Workshop:**

- ◆ “Toxigenic” Mold 1998

Path of the Proselyte: Late

■ CDC Reviews:

- ◆ “Conclusion regarding the possible association between cases of pulmonary hemorrhage/hemosideroisis in infants in Cleveland and water damage or exposure to *S. chartarum* are not substantiated adequately by the scientific evidence... the associations should be considered **not proven**...”

MMWR 10 March, 2000

Path of the Proselyte: Late

■ AIHA Review of Epidemiology:

- ◆ “... at this time there is not enough evidence to support an association between mycotoxic fungi and a change in the spectrum of illness, the severity of illness, or an increase in risk of illness.”

AIHA “The Synergist” April, 2001

Path of the Proselyte: Late

■ IOM Review of Asthma:

- ◆ Evidence “*sufficient*” that fungi can trigger *exacerbations* of asthma.
- ◆ Evidence “*not sufficient*” that fungi can cause *development* of asthma.

IOM January 19, 2000

Path of the Proselyte: Late

■ NIOSH Review of Literature:

- ◆ “There is inadequate evidence to support the conclusion that exposure to mycotoxins in the indoor (nonindustrial) environment is causally related to symptoms or illness among building occupants.”

Page and Trout, AIHJ Sep/Oct 2001

Path of the Proselyte: Late

■ NIOSH Review of Literature:

- ◆ “there is inadequate evidence to support recommendations for greater urgency in cases where mycotoxin-producing fungi have been isolated.”

Page and Trout, AIHJ Sep/Oct 2001

MOLD and HUMAN ILLNESS

■ Credo: What I Believe

- ◆ Toxicoses
- ◆ Irritation/"Sick Building Syndrome"
- ◆ Allergies
- ◆ Infections

MOLD and HUMAN ILLNESS

- **The Way Out is Through**
 - ◆ Needed:
 - ◆ A paradigm
 - ◆ Consistent case definitions

The Way Out is Through

- **A paradigm:**
 - ◆ Observed health effect
 - ◆ Identified agent capable
 - ◆ Defined link between

The Way Out is Through

■ Consistent Case Definitions:

- ◆ Understandable
- ◆ Consistent clinical, lab criteria
 - ◆ Sort case from non-case
 - ◆ Sort “probable” from “confirmed”
- ◆ Modified with advancing knowledge

Path of the Proselyte: Late

- CDC Reviews:
 - ◆ Internal
 - ◆ External
- AIHA Review of Epidemiology
- IOM Review of Asthma
- NIOSH Review of Literature

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