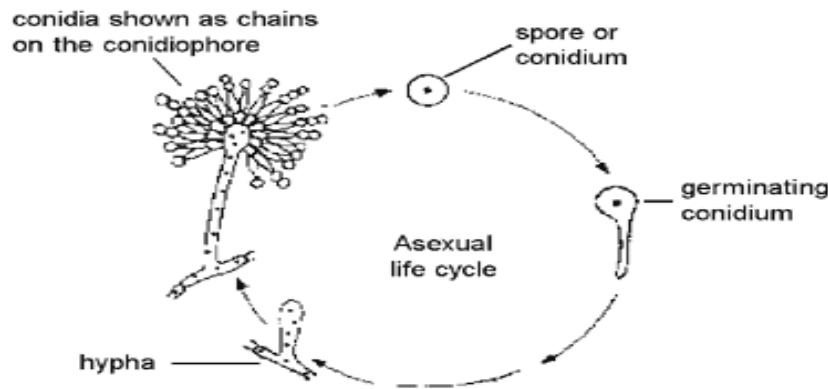


# FUNGAL FUN FACTS



## CONDITIONS for GROWTH

- Spores are always present in the air and every object that has dust on it will have some spores in the dust.
- Will grow wherever conditions are favorable:
  - High RH (> 60 %)
  - High temperature
  - Poor air circulation
  - High concentration of spores (dust)
  - pH: Most fungi prefer a slight acidic medium
  - Darkness. Research indicates that some species can be destroyed by exposure to UV light. Note: UV damages cellulose and is not ideal for paper.
  - Wetness: mold usually begins to grow on wet materials within 48 hours.

## PREVENTION

- Maintain moderate temperature and relative humidity (below 72° F and less than 60% RH).
- Monitor the environment.
- Circulate the air.
- Vacuum/dust regularly.

## IDENTIFICATION and HANDLING

- Active mold is damp, slimy, and smears if touched. Inactive mold is dry and powdery and can be brushed off with a soft brush.
- Any person with allergies, respiratory problems, or a compromised immune system should not handle moldy materials.
- Everyone working with moldy materials must wear PPE (Personnel Protective Equipment): respirator with HEPA cartridge, disposable gloves, goggles, protective clothing.
- Freezing moldy items will stop active mold growth, but will NOT kill the mold. Note: do not freeze any photographic or A/V materials.

## HEALTH CONCERNS

- The toxic effect depends on type of mold, amount of exposure, type of exposure, and susceptibility of the individual.
- DON'T PANIC: most mold species found on library material is not the scary type.
- After treating moldy items, clean work surfaces and tools with 70% ethyl alcohol solution and immediately throw out disposable PPE.