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## Household Mold Linked to Depression

**Science Daily** — A groundbreaking public health study has found a connection between damp, moldy homes and depression. The study, led by Brown University epidemiologist Edmond Shenassa, is the largest investigation of an association between mold and mood and is the first such investigation conducted outside the United Kingdom. Shenassa said the findings, published in the American Journal of Public Health, came as a complete surprise. In fact, after a few U.K. studies published in the last decade had suggested a link, Shenassa and his skeptical team set out to debunk the notion that any link existed. "We thought that once we statistically accounted for factors that could clearly contribute to depression – things like employment status and crowding – we would see any link vanish," said Shenassa, the lead author of the study and an associate professor in the Department of Community Health at Brown. "But the opposite was true. We found a solid association between depression and living in a damp, moldy home."

"Physical health and perceptions of control, are linked with an elevated risk for depression," Shenassa said, "and that makes sense. If you are sick from mold, and feel you can't get rid of it, it may affect your mental health." The research team includes Allison Liebhaber, a former Brown undergraduate; Constantine Daskalakis of Thomas Jefferson University; Matthias Braubach of WHO; and Mary Jean Brown of the Harvard School of Public Health. **Note: This story has been adapted from a news release issued by Brown University**



### Fungal of the Month

#### *Trichoderma*

This is one of the more ubiquitous fungi. There are approximately 20 individual species in this genus. It is a wet spore, easily spread by rain, insects, water splash and when dry, by wind. Indoors it is usually found on paper, tapestry, wood, in kitchens on the outer surface of unglazed ceramics and on a variety of other substrates. It can be found outdoors in soil, decaying wood, grains, citrus fruits, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, paper, textiles and on damp wood.

Sampling procedures can include non-viable spore trap, viable sampling and it can be detected on surface samples via sterile swabs. Human infections have been documented in the pulmonary cavity, peritonitis in a dialysis patient, and a perihepatic infection in a liver transplant patient.

It is considered an opportunistic risk for immunocompromised patients.

### Vinyl Wallpaper

We continue to see hidden damage on numerous types of projects due to vinyl wallpaper. Keep in mind that it acts as a vapor barrier trapping moisture inside wall cavities where damage can occur.

