

Kingdom Fungi

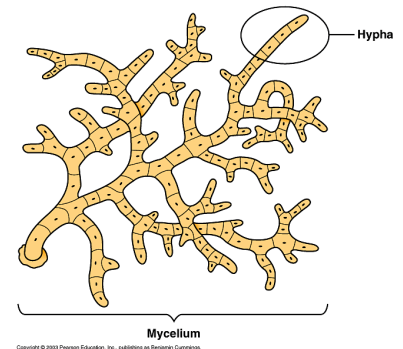
A. Characteristics of Fungi

1. Are eukaryotic, mostly saprobic (absorb organic molecules from dead material) organisms.
2. Are parasitic, symbiotic, or free-living.
3. Are ecologically important as decomposers and recyclers.
4. Reproduce asexually and sexually and disperse to new habitats by means of spores.
5. Each cell is enclosed in a rigid cell wall composed of chitin.



B. Body Plan

1. Body plan is adapted to fungus' saprobic method for acquiring nutrients.
2. A spore germinates into a threadlike hypha which grows rapidly and branches to form a mycelium. (mat)
3. rhizoids – hyphae that penetrates material. Release enzymes that digest.



C. In Humans,

1. Some live on skin, vagina, or gastrointestinal tract in harmony with normal bacterial flora
2. Most have limited ability to cause disease.
3. Causes of disease
 - a. Disturbance of natural flora
 - b. Impaired immune system