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Abstract

This study examined the health perceptions of courthouse workers considered occupationally exposed to fungi with a hermeneutic approach. This method focussed analysis on the expected susceptible and hypersusceptible populations and identified transdisciplinary literature surrounding health effects of exposure to fungi. Fungi were spectated from indoor air samples in the Court of Queen's Bench (CQB) building. Four hundred and ninety occupants received the MiniRQLQ and a "hybridized" survey. Results indicate that more full-time CQB occupants than expected in a hypersusceptible population reported more severe respiratory and fatigue symptoms than did occasional occupants (MiniRQLQ: RR = 2.12 and Hybridized Survey RR = 3.05). Symptoms occurred Monday to Friday during respondents' workdays, however the timing data beyond that was inconclusive. Occupants and building owners may wish to adopt a hermeneutic method to examine health risks when understandings of levels of exposure to fungi are unclear or when exposure analysis is unavailable. Key words: courthouse occupants; fungi; health-related quality of life; hermeneutic; hybridized survey; indoor air quality; respiratory symptoms; rhinoconjunctivitis, Calgary, Canada.

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