

Dangerous air quality alert issued for toxic mold

September 7 2012

The Midwest is under an air quality alert for dangerous levels of mold. The Midwest mold count today is 60,000 – well over the 50,000 threshold that signals a dangerous air quality warning.

"Headaches, sinus pain and malaise are the result of today's assault on the respiratory system by irritants," said Dr. Joseph Leija, an allergist who performs the Gottlieb Allergy Count, the official allergy count for the Midwest. "If you feel sick, it is likely allergies."

The official Gottlieb Allergy Count for today is: Grass – Moderate, Mold - Very High (Alert Status), Weeds - High and Ragweed – Moderate.

"Due to corn harvesting, Loyola is recording moderate and high levels of grass lately, because corn is a member of the [grass family](#)," Dr. Leija said. "The dangerously high [mold count](#) coupled with grass, weeds and ragweed is a real assault on Midwesterner's breathing health."

Dr. Leija credits the unusual allergy count to the sporadic rains, continuous heat and the [high humidity](#). "Check your yard for standing water and your basement for any seepage," Dr. Leija said. "A solution of bleach and water can be used to kill [mold spores](#) on items."

Tips from Dr. Leija to safeguard your health include rinsing nasal passages with saline solution to remove trapped particles, washing your hair before sleeping at night and staying indoors in air conditioning.

Provided by Loyola University Health System

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