



The University of Texas at Tyler  
Environmental Health and Safety  
**BIOLOGICAL AGENT REFERENCE SHEET**

Characteristics	
Risk Group	Risk group 1: Agents that are not associated with disease in healthy adult humans, and pose little or no risk to an individual or community.
Agent Type	Biohazard
Description	<p>Ophidiomyces ophidiicola is a novel fungus from a newly derived genus of Candida fungus. It is specific to only snake populations and to this point has no zoonotic examples to date. It is sporofytic and does create spores thus the importance of use of biological safety cabinets to ensure it doesn't mix with any snakes or other fungus in the building/research labs. It's virulence comes from eating away snake scales and infecting the soft tissue below.</p>
Host Range	All Snakes
Exposure route	Direct contact
Incubation period	4-8 days

Laboratory Hazards	
High Energy	Centrifugation, sonication, vortexing
Sharps	None

Aerosols	None
Equipment	Easily adhere to and stay on unsanitary equipment
Exposed body	None
Notes	No health hazards to humans

### Laboratory Handling Guidelines

Biosafety Level	1 - refer to Biosafety Manual; contact EH&S for a copy
Training	Biosafety training
Engineering controls	Recommended use in BSL II
PPE	Eye protection, gloves and lab coat
Waste	Biohazard - put in red biohazard bins

### Agent Viability

Disinfection	10% bleach, 70% ethanol
Survival outside host	Fungal spores can last on surfaces for years
Engineering controls	Use BSC II for any culturing of fungus
PPE	Eye protection, gloves, long sleeve or lab coat
Waste	Biohazard - put in red biohazard bins

### Exposure and Spill procedures

Mucous membranes	flush eyes, nose, mouth/throat for 15 minutes
Skin contact	Wash with soap and water for a minimum of 30 second for bare skin contact; for broken skin wash with soap and water for 15 minutes
Minor (small) spills	Notify all persons present in the area. Allow aerosols to settle. While wearing protective clothing, gently cover the spill with absorbent paper towel and apply appropriate disinfectant, starting at perimeter and working towards the centre. Allow sufficient contact time before clean up.
Major (large) spills	Contact EH&S immediately; after-hours contact University Police
Waste	Decontaminate all wastes before disposal by incineration, chemical disinfection or steam sterilization

### References

*Experimental Infection of Snakes with O. ophioidicola* .... Dr. Jeffrey Lorch USGS. Molecular Biology Dec. 2018

