

Hyphae (hi-fee)

A long, branching filament found primarily in fungi but also in fungus-like bacteria such as Actinomyces and Streptomyces. When a spore germinates, hypha emerges. It is the principal element of the growing or vegetative form of a mold (filamentous fungi) characterized by branching tube-like growth. The hypha is suited for actively penetrating, exploring and exploiting solid substrates. It is the part of the fungus that feeds, grows, and ultimately may produce some kind of reproductive structure.