

MOLD

WHAT IS MOLD?

Mold is part of the “biological” classification, which also includes (but is not limited to) bacteria, dust mites, cockroaches, and pollens.

Mold is the most common form of fungi on earth; there are over 100,000 different types – About 10 of those are common indoors.

Mold reproduces through spores (tiny specks that float through the air – both indoors and outdoors). When these “specks” land on a suitable surface, they grow and produce chemicals.

Often gray or black, but can also be white, orange, or green.



WHERE DOES MOLD GROW?

When a spore lands on a damp/wet food source, mold can grow!

In order to grow, mold needs: oxygen, water, and a source of food to grow.

“Mold food” can be almost anything, including: wood, paper, carpet, tile, foods, insulation.

WHY IS MOLD A PROBLEM?

Exposure to mold can:

- Cause irritation of eyes, skin, nose, throat, lungs
- Trigger asthma attacks
- Cause allergic reactions

WHO IS MOST AT RISK?

Individuals with:

- Lower-airway diseases (asthma, bronchitis),
- Allergies
- Compromised immune systems

Young children (birth to age 2)

Elders



HOW CAN YOU TELL IF MOLD IS GROWING IN YOUR HOME?

Sight

Mold usually appears as distinctly colored spots.

Smell

Mold often produces a foul, musty, earthy smell.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO DO TO PREVENT MOLD GROWTH?

Controlling moisture is key to preventing mold growth!

VENTILATE bathrooms, kitchens, and other moisture-generating sources to the outside

Avoid installing carpet in a moisture-prone place (i.e. below a sink)

Remove and discard any porous material (such as carpets, clothing, drywall, wallpaper, tiles, paper) that have been wet for more than 48 hours.

Direct water/rain gutter AWAY from building – because the water in the soil goes to the bottom of your house, which allows for mold growth

Repair leaking roofs, walls, doors, pipes, and windows

Keep surfaces clean and dry – wipe up spills and overflows right away



WHAT DO YOU DO IF YOU HAVE MOLD GROWTH IN YOUR HOME?

You must clean up AND remove all mold contamination – NOT just kill the mold, because dead mold can still be toxic:

Identify all moldy areas (search your house thoroughly)
Under sinks, in cabinets, behind toilets, behind furniture, drywall, crawl space, etc.

Identify all possible causes
Plumbing/appliance leaks?
High humidity (moisture in the air)?
Condensation (build up of moisture on a surface – like when a mirror is foggy after a shower)?



Clean mold off hard surfaces and other non porous materials with detergent and water, and dry completely. Then, disinfect the *cleaned* surfaces with one of the following solutions:
¼ cup household bleach per 1 gallon of clean water for light contamination.
1 ½ cups household bleach per 1 gallon of clean water for heavy contamination.

Protect yourself when cleaning up mold:
Wear long sleeves and pants, shoes and socks, rubber gloves, and goggles.
Open a window to let in fresh air while you're working.

Any area of mold greater than 15 square feet, it's best to hire a professional to get rid of it.

Don't worry about testing for mold to see which kind of mold it is! Most experts think it's better to spend your time and money on cleaning up the mold, rather than testing it.

