



Mold

Molds are microscopic organisms found everywhere in the environment, indoors and outdoors. When present in large quantities, molds have the potential to cause adverse health effects.

Health Effects of Mold Exposure

- Sneezing
- Cough and congestion
- Runny nose
- Aggravation of asthma
- Eye irritation
- Dermatitis (skin rash)

People at greatest risk of suffering from these health effects are those with allergies, asthma, sinusitis, other lung diseases or a weakened immune system (e.g., HIV patients).

How to Recognize Mold

- Sight - Usually appears as colored woolly mats
- Smell - Often produces a foul, musty, earthy smell

Preventing Mold Growth

- Remove excess moisture with a wet-dry vacuum and dry out the building as quickly as possible.
- Use fans to speed drying.
- Clean wet materials with detergent and water.
- Discard all water-damaged materials.
- Discard all porous materials that have been wet for more than 48 hours.

General Mold Cleanup Tips

- Identify and correct moisture problem.
- Make sure work area is ventilated well.
- Clean wet items and surfaces with detergent and water.
- Discard mold-damaged materials in plastic bags.
- Disinfect cleaned surfaces with ¼- to ½- cup household bleach in 1 gallon of water. CAUTION: Do not mix bleach with other cleaning products that contain ammonia.
- Use hand, eye and respiratory protection. An N-95 respirator is recommended.

Source: Occupational Safety & Health Administration

Mold Facts

- Potential health effects and symptoms associated with mold exposures include allergic reactions, asthma and other respiratory complaints.
- There is no practical way to eliminate all mold and mold spores in the indoor environment; the way to control indoor mold growth is to eliminate sources of moisture.
- Fix the source of the water problem or leak to prevent mold growth.
- Maintaining indoor relative humidity below 70% (25 - 60%, if possible). Clean and dry any damp or wet building materials and furnishings within 24 to 48 hours to prevent mold growth.
- Clean mold off hard surfaces with water and detergent, and dry completely. Absorbent materials, such as ceiling tiles, that are moldy may need to be replaced.

Source: Environmental Protection AgencySources: Medline Plus, National Institutes of Health, American Academy of Family Physicians

Safety tips developed based on generally accepted safety standards believed to be reliable at the date of publication. Information is for general guidance only and should not be relied upon for legal compliance purposes.

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