



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: MOLD

1: What Are Molds?

Molds are a type of fungus. Other types of fungus include mildews and mushrooms. Molds occur widely in nature and outdoors. There is no practical way to get rid of all mold spores indoors.

2: Where can I find molds in my home?

You might find mold in water damaged areas, on the inside of cold exterior walls, behind dressers, headboards and in closets where things are stored against a cold outer wall. Other areas where mold often grows are kitchens, bathrooms, laundry or utility rooms, and basements. Carpets and other water-damaged materials will easily support mold growth. Mold may also grow undetected inside wall spaces, under carpet, and inside heating ducts.

3: What makes molds grow in my home?

Mold enters your home as tiny spores. The spores need moisture to begin growing, digesting and destroying. Molds can grow on almost any surface, such as wood, ceiling tiles, wallpaper, paints, carpet, sheet rock, and insulation. The mold grows best when there is lots of moisture from a leaky roof, high humidity, or flood. There is no way to get rid of all molds and mold spores from your home. But you can control mold growth by keeping your home dry.

4: When is mold a problem?

You know you have mold when you smell the "musty" odor or see small black or white specks along your damp bathroom or basement walls. Some mold is hidden growing behind wall coverings or ceiling tiles. Even dry, dead mold can cause health problems, so always take precautions when you suspect mold.

5: How do molds affect people?

Some people are sensitive to molds. For these people, exposure to molds can cause symptoms such as nasal stuffiness, eye irritation, wheezing, or skin irritation. Some people, such as those with serious allergies to molds, may have more severe reactions. Severe reactions may occur among workers exposed to large amounts of molds in occupational settings, such as farmers working around moldy hay. Severe reactions may include fever and shortness of breath. Some people with chronic lung illnesses, such as obstructive lung disease, may develop mold infections in their lungs.

OTHER RESOURCES:

[Mold | Washington State Department of Health](#)
[Mold | CDC](#)