

MOLD

For more than a decade, mold has been in the news. People are talking about the effect on population health and damage to the building. But what are the risks and issues? A number of agencies have guidelines that include protective measures for mold remediation and cleaning.

WHAT IS MOLD?

Mold is a common term for fungi that are found virtually everywhere in nature, including in soil and on plants, food, and wet materials.



HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE A MOLD PROBLEM?

If you notice water stains, discoloration on walls, floors, or ceilings, bubbling, cracking, or peeling paint or wallpaper, then you may be dealing with mold.

If you do not see any of these signs, but smell a musty odor, mold may be growing underneath or behind water-damaged materials, such as walls, carpeting, or wallpaper.



WHERE IS MOLD FOUND?

Mold is found everywhere in all environments all around the world. In indoor environments, mold is most often associated with damp, musty locations such as bathrooms, basements, and attics.



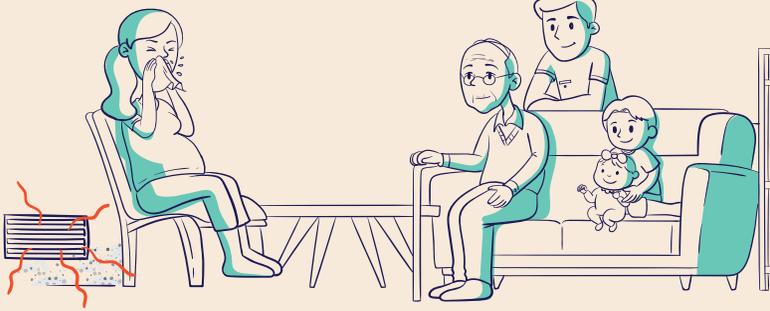
WHO DOES MOLD AFFECT?

Some people can be affected by airborne mold spore exposure. People who may be affected more severely and quickly than others include:



WHAT ARE SOME OF THE HEALTH PROBLEMS CAUSED BY MOLD?

Exposure to molds can lead to symptoms such as sneezing, runny nose, red eyes, and skin rash. People with serious mold allergies may have more severe reactions, including shortness of breath.



HOW CAN YOU CLEAN UP MOLD?

If the growth is less than 10 square feet, you can take these three steps to eliminate the mold:

1. identify and correct the source of moisture
2. clean and disinfect the affected area
3. ensure the area is thoroughly dried

If the area of mold growth is greater than 10 square feet, you should consider hiring an industrial hygienist and/or mold remediator.

For expert advice on mold contamination, it is recommended that you contact AIHA or an AIHA-listed consultant.

HOW TO KEEP MOLD AWAY

The key to preventing and stopping indoor mold growth is to control excessive moisture and condensation. Keep susceptible areas in the home clean and dry, clean and repair gutters regularly, make sure the ground slopes down and away from the home's foundation, use a dehumidifier in basements and other areas that are chronically damp, and keep air conditioner drip pans and drain lines clean.

