

MANAGING MOLD



What is mold?

Molds reproduce by means of tiny spores; the spores are invisible to the naked eye and float through outdoor and indoor air. Mold may begin growing indoors when mold spores land on surfaces that are wet. There are many types of mold, and none of them will grow without water or moisture.



Mold grows where there is moisture, such as around leaks in roofs, windows, or pipes; condensation (e.g., warm air on cold surfaces); or where there has been a flood. Mold grows on paper, cardboard, ceiling tiles, and wood. Mold can also grow in dust, paints, wallpaper, insulation, drywall, carpet, fabric, and upholstery

How does it impact health?



All molds have potential health effects, but some are especially toxic and can cause sinus inflammation, nose bleeds, respiratory diseases, and can irritate existing asthma symptoms and allergies. Some can even have neurotoxic, reproductive, and carcinogenic properties. Inhaling or touching mold or mold spores may cause allergic reactions in sensitive individuals. Allergic responses include hay fever-type symptoms, such as sneezing, runny nose, red eyes, and skin rash (dermatitis).

How do I manage mold in my home?



The mold spores will not grow if moisture is not present. Indoor mold growth can and should be prevented or controlled by controlling moisture indoors. If there is mold growth in your home, you must clean up the mold and fix the water problem. If you clean up the mold, but don't fix the water problem, then, most likely, the mold problem will come back.

Places that are often or always damp, like a bathroom or basement, can be hard to maintain completely free of mold. If some mold seems to reappear, increasing ventilation (running a fan or opening a window) and cleaning more frequently will usually prevent mold from recurring, or at least keep the mold to a minimum.

Fix plumbing leaks and other water problems as soon as possible. Dry all items completely.

Scrub mold off hard surfaces with detergent and water, and dry completely.



Prevent mold.

HUMIDITY

Keep humidity levels low. An air conditioner or dehumidifier will help.

VENTILATION

Increase ventilation by opening doors and windows. Use fans and bathroom exhaust fans. LIMIT CARPET

Limit carpet use in bathrooms and other high-moisture areas.

REPAIR LEAKS

Repair leaks as soon as possible. Find the source of the problem first, fix it, then dry the area.

CLEANING MOLD

Scrub mold off hard surfaces with detergent and water, and dry completely. Or 1 cup of bleach to 1 gallon of water.