



Fact Sheet

Mold

Occupants

What is mold?

Mold is a common type of fungus that can be found naturally both indoors and outdoors. Its primary function is to breakdown leaves, wood, and plant debris. Mold thrives in warm, damp areas and will digest anything it lands on. It reproduces itself by sending out numerous spores. If the spores land in a warm, wet area it will begin to grow.

How do I know if I have mold in my home?

Mold appears as random white or black splotches on floors, walls, and ceilings. Mold will destroy the surface it is growing on and given time will not just sit on the surface. There are five places that mold is highly likely to grow in your home:

- Bathroom shower surrounds
- Basement walls
- Areas around faucets
- Any dark, enclosed spaces
- Behind wallpaper



Why is there mold in my house?

Mold needs two things in order to survive and grow: food and water. In a home these things are found in areas that are consistently damp and warm. Common problems in and around your home that may allow mold to grow include:

- Leaking roofs
- Leaking faucets in kitchen or bath
- Windows that are unsealed against weather
- Damp carpets due to water leaks, spills, or pet stains
- Areas that are subject to high humidity such as bathrooms, laundry rooms, or basements

Can mold make me sick?

Exposure to mold can make you sick. In otherwise healthy individuals, symptoms of exposure include:

- Headaches
- Eye, skin, nose, throat and lung irritation
- Allergic reactions such as runny nose, sneezing, and rashes
- For individuals with asthma, exposure can make the condition worse
- For individuals with weakened immune systems, exposure to mold can lead to infections



Greenfield Health Department



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

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How do I get rid of it?

If the area of mold is less than 3 feet by 3 feet then you can remove the mold by yourself, if the area is larger we recommend hiring a professional to remove the mold. Follow these steps to remove the mold safely:

1. Wear personnel protective equipment-rubber gloves, goggles, N-95 respirator. (Respirators can be purchased at any home improvement store.)
2. Use simple detergent and water. Using bleach is not necessary.
3. Discard any items that cannot be cleaned such as books, linens, clothes, paper documents, or stuffed toys.
4. Do not paint over mold.
5. Thoroughly clean and dry carpets and rugs. Discard and replace padding.

How can I prevent it?

Mold can be prevented by ridding your home of any damp or wet areas. This can be accomplished by taking the following precautions:

- Report leaks in gutters, roofs, window panes, and faucets to the owner or property manager.
- Use fans or open windows in bathrooms, kitchens, and laundry rooms.
- Use HEPA filters when vacuuming-this will reduce the amount of mold in the air.
- Clean condensation from windows.
- Use Air conditioners and dehumidifiers.
- Wipe up spills and free standing water quickly.

Is this my responsibility?

You, as the occupant of your home are responsible for keeping the areas clean and dry. Regular cleaning of high moisture spaces, including walls and ceilings will reduce the chance of mold growth. You are also responsible for reporting any problems to the owner in a timely manner, and following up to ensure the problem is solved.

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