

Does Mold Have a Hold on Your Health?

Are mold levels high in your house or office, creating havoc on your health? Chances are good they are, and you don't even know it.

by Victoria Smith

Molds are simple, microscopic organisms that are present virtually everywhere, both indoors and outdoors. They release innumerable lightweight spores, which in most instances eventually become airborne and travel to other destinations. These destinations may become mold infested and even toxic if the molds produce compounds that have toxic properties known as *mycotoxins*. Mycotoxins can appear in both living and dead mold spores and are produced depending on the surface on which the mold is growing as well as conditions such as temperature, pH and humidity.

Molds produce negative health effects through inflammation, allergy or infection. For some people, even a small amount of mold spores can create health problems, particularly asthma and respiratory ailments. Other people, however, can tolerate an extremely high amount of spores without feeling ill effects.

Mitigating Mold

Once mold starts to grow in insulation or wallboard, the only way to deal with the problem is to remove or replace the affected materials. In areas where flooding has occurred, walls and other flood-damaged surfaces need to be cleaned and treated professionally in order to prevent mold growth.

If you see or smell mold inside your home, office or school, take immediate action, because it could very well become airborne if you wait too long to treat it. In order to test the levels of mold spores in the air and determine the level of risk, a mold specialist must conduct reliable air sampling using professional equipment.

Professional quality cleaners and disinfectants are utilized to treat the affected areas and completely remove mold spores from the surfaces and the air. To remove mold and mold food from non-porous surfaces, use soap.

To prevent and mitigate mold, however, you can take the following actions:

- Stop any sources of leaks or flooding.
- Weatherize the affected building so that excessive amounts of humid air will not enter.
- Use an air conditioner or dehumidifier during humid months to keep the indoor humidity level below 50%.
- Do not let water stand in air conditioning or refrigerator drip pans.
- Use exhaust fans in kitchens, utility rooms and bathrooms to remove excess heat and humidity.
- Remove carpets and other porous materials that have become infested with mold.

- Avoid carpeting bathrooms or utility rooms.
- Use mold inhibitors that can be added to paints.
- Keep the air pressure in the lowest rooms equal to, or slightly greater than, the pressure of water vapor in the soil.

Victoria Smith is a board-certified holistic practitioner in Florence, Kentucky. She can be reached at (859)282-0022 or significanthealing.com

Recognizing Signs of Toxic Mold Exposure

Allergic reactions, including fever, are common after mold exposure. Symptoms of exposure to mycotoxins are:

Immune system suppression

Respiratory problems, including asthma and infections

Nasal and sinus congestion

A dry and hacking cough

Nose and/or throat irritation

Eye irritation with burning, watery or reddened eyes

Skin rashes or irritation

Irritable bowel syndrome

Body aches and pain (Chronic Fatigue)

Food intolerances and allergies

Headaches


Mood swings

Memory impairment

Individuals who are most susceptible to mold health problems are those who have existing or underlying respiratory conditions, weakened and suppressed immune systems, the elderly, infants and young children and people on medications such as chemotherapy.

Making our world
a safer place to live.

ACTION PROPERTY MANAGEMENT, LLC
Mold Testing and Abatement Services



Mark Smith
Owner
859-547-2232
MoldSafeHome@yahoo.com