

Mold

The Impact of Mold:

- Not all mold that appears black in color is “Black mold”.
- “Black mold” also does **not** require different precautions than other molds.
- All molds have the potential to cause negative health effects, but they are not always toxic.
- Mold produces allergens that can trigger allergic reactions or asthma attacks.
- People with allergies, immune suppression, or lung disease may be more susceptible to fungal infections.
- Mold has **not** been proven to cause pulmonary hemorrhage or memory loss.
- “Black mold” has **not** been identified as a cause of human illness.
- If you believe you are sick because of mold in your building, speak with your doctor to determine the appropriate action to take.

Why Mold Grows:

- Mold is common in buildings and homes.
- Mold spores can enter buildings from open doorways, windows, and ventilation systems with outdoor air intakes.
- Mold will grow anywhere indoors where there is excessive moisture.
- Wet materials such as paper, cardboard, ceiling tiles, and wood are especially good for growing mold.

Removing Mold:

- First, identify and fix if there is a problem with water or moisture.
- If the mold is less than 10 square feet, you can clean the mold up yourself.
- Wear gloves, goggles, and a N-95 respirator (face mask).
- Scrub mold off hard surfaces with detergent (such as bleach) and water, and dry completely.
 - If using bleach, do not use more than 1 cup of bleach in 1 gallon of water.
 - Never mix bleach with ammonia or other cleaners.
 - Open windows and doors for fresh air.
- Moldy absorbent materials such as ceiling tiles and carpet should be thrown away.
- Do not run the HVAC system if you think it may be contaminated with mold without cleaning it first.
- It is not necessary to test or identify the species of mold growing in a residence.
- If mold covers greater than 10 square feet, or you cannot manage the amount on your own, contact a professional who has experience cleaning mold.

Preventing Mold:

- Control indoor moisture levels and humidity.
- Use air conditioner or dehumidifier during humid months.
- Fix roof leaks, landscaping and gutters that direct water into or under the building.

For more information on what to do in the case of mold, call 211 or search our online database:

- www.helplinecenter.org/211database
 - Try the following keyword search items
 - Mold Pollution Information
 - General Minor Home Repair Program
 - Home Rehabilitation Programs
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Sources:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Facts about Stachybotrys chartarum and Other Molds <https://www.cdc.gov/mold/stachy.htm#Q14>
- Poison Control – National Capital Poison Center: Mold 101: Effects on Human Health <https://www.poison.org/articles/2011-oct/mold-101-effects-on-human-health>
- United States Environmental Protection Agency: Mold Remediation in Schools and Commercial Buildings Guide <https://www.epa.gov/mold/mold-remediation-schools-and-commercial-buildings-guide>

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