



# MOLD AND MOISTURE PREVENTION



Thinkstock by Getty Images

Have you ever noticed spots that smell musty in areas throughout your house?<sup>1</sup> Those spots are mold—tiny spores that grow in areas that are moist or damp.<sup>2</sup> Where there is moisture, there is the chance for mold to be present in the air and on surfaces. Exposure to mold can present a serious health hazard for some people, particularly those with mold allergies.<sup>1</sup> Some common side effects of mold sensitivities include eye and throat irritation, coughing, sneezing, and a stuffy nose.<sup>1</sup> In extreme cases, people with weak immune systems or chronic lung illnesses could get serious infections in their lungs when exposed to mold.<sup>1</sup>

## Prevention Tips

To help prevent mold and moisture from affecting the health of you and those around you, follow the tips below:

- ▶ Immediately clean up water spills or leaks in the home. Mold feeds on moisture.<sup>2,3</sup>
- ▶ If you see mold, try to remove it right away using commercial mold-removal products or a bleach solution. If you can't remove the mold, call in the professionals!<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ Showers, laundry rooms, and kitchens are breeding grounds for mold. Make sure these areas are properly ventilated to reduce the risk of mold.<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ Since you cannot prevent mold spores from being inside your home, the best way to control mold growth is to control moisture. Keep humidity low inside your residence (below 60 percent relative humidity) by using an air conditioner or dehumidifier.<sup>2,3</sup>
- ▶ Condensation on windows, walls, or pipes can be a sign that your humidity levels are off. If you see condensation, dry the surface right away.<sup>2,3</sup>
- ▶ Make sure your air conditioning drip pans are cleaned regularly.<sup>2,3</sup>
- ▶ If your roof gutter breaks or is leaking, repair it immediately. Also, make sure you clean your gutters often.<sup>2,3</sup>
- ▶ Take precautions to limit your body's exposure to mold when removing it from your home by wearing an N-95 respirator, gloves, and goggles.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Facts about Mold and Dampness. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). [http://www.cdc.gov/mold/dampness\\_facts.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/mold/dampness_facts.htm). Updated 17 June 2014. Accessed 23 March 2015.

<sup>2</sup>Mold Resources. A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture, and Your Home. United States Environmental Protection Agency. <http://www.epa.gov/iedmold1/moldresources.html>. Updated 19 November 2012. Accessed April 2015.

<sup>3</sup>Moisture and Mold Prevention and Control Tips. A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture, and Your Home. United States Environmental Protection Agency. <http://www.epa.gov/iedmold1/preventionandcontrol.html>. Updated 5 March 2012. Accessed 23 March 2015.

<sup>4</sup>What to Wear When Cleaning Moldy Areas. A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture, and Your Home. United States Environmental Protection Agency. <http://www.epa.gov/iedmold1/whattowear.html>. Updated 5 March 2012. Accessed April 2015.

For more information on your local resources, contact:



**NAVY AND MARINE CORPS PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER**  
PREVENTION AND PROTECTION START HERE