



Nassau County Health Department Mold Fact Sheet and Clean up Guidance

Should I be concerned about mold in my home?

Mold can be a concern in the home and should not be allowed to grow. Extensive mold contamination may cause health problems as well as damage to the home.

Can mold make my family sick?

Exposure to mold can cause health effects in some people. The most common effects are allergic responses from breathing mold spores. Serious infections from living molds are relatively rare and occur mainly in people with severely suppressed immune systems. Many types of molds may produce toxins but only under certain growth conditions. Toxic effects have been reported from eating moldy grain, but evidence is weak that breathing mold spores in buildings causes toxic effects.

What are common symptoms of mold exposure?

Allergy and irritation are the most common symptoms of mold exposure.

Who is most at risk for health problems from mold exposure?

Exposure to high amounts of mold is not healthy for anyone, so obvious mold growth in the home should be cleaned up. However, some individuals may be more susceptible to health problems from mold exposure. These include; individuals with current respiratory sensitivities (e.g., allergies, asthma, or emphysema), individuals with a compromised immune system (e.g., HIV/AIDS infection, organ transplant patients, or chemotherapy patients)

Are some molds more harmful than others?

Any extensive indoor mold growth should be treated as a potential health concern and removed as soon as practical no matter what species of mold is present. Identify and correct the source of moisture so that mold will not grow back.

How do I know if I have a mold problem?

A mold problem can usually be seen or smelled. Mold growth may often appear as slightly furry, discolored, or slimy patches that increase in size as they grow. Molds also produce a musty odor that may be the first indication of a problem. The best way to find mold is to examine areas for visible signs of mold growth, water staining, or follow your nose to the source of the odor. If you can see or smell mold, you can assume you have a mold problem. Other clues include excess moisture and water damage. It may be necessary to look behind and underneath surfaces, such as carpets, wallpaper, cabinets, and walls.

Should I have my home tested for mold?

Sampling can be expensive. The results are also difficult to interpret partially because we have very limited information about what level of mold exposure is associated with health effects. In some cases, knowing the type of mold that is present can be helpful, but for most cases, sampling is unnecessary. Overall, the best practice regardless of the type or amount of mold is to promptly clean up any mold growth in your home and to correct the water problem that caused it.

Get Rid of Mold

After a flood, mold will grow in your house. It can make you sick. You will need to clean your house.



Take things that were wet for 2 or more days outside.

Things that stayed wet for 2 days have mold growing on them even if you can't see it.

Take out stuff made of cloth, unless you can wash them in **hot** water. Also take out stuff that can't be cleaned easily (like leather, paper, wood, and carpet).

Use bleach to clean mold off hard things (like floors, stoves, sinks, certain toys, countertops, flatware, plates, and tools).

Follow these steps:



- Never mix bleach with ammonia or other cleaners.
- Wear rubber boots, rubber gloves, goggles, and N-95 mask.
- Open windows and doors to get fresh air when you use bleach.
- Mix no more than 1 cup of bleach in 1 gallon of water.
- Wash the item with the bleach and water mixture.
- If the surface of the item is rough, scrub the surface with a stiff brush.
- Rinse the item with clean water.
- Dry the item or leave it out to dry.

Recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Questions? Contact the Nassau County Department of Health, Office of Community Sanitation at (516) 227-9715, Monday through Friday between the hours of 9:00am and 4:45 pm