

Hazard: Damp Conditions & Mold Growth

Identity of Hazard(s): Mold will grow in places with a lot of moisture, such as around leaks in roofs, windows, or pipes, or where there has been flooding. Mold grows well on paper products, cardboard, ceiling tiles, and wood products. Mold can also grow in dust, paints, wallpaper, insulation, drywall, carpet, fabric, and upholstery.¹

Primary Health Outcome(s): Asthma²

Health Alert! Some people are sensitive to molds. For these people, molds can cause nasal stuffiness, throat irritation, coughing or wheezing, eye irritation, or, in some cases, skin irritation. People with mold allergies may have more severe reactions. Immune-compromised people and people with chronic lung illnesses, such as obstructive lung disease, may get serious infections in their lungs when they are exposed to mold. These people should stay away from areas that are likely to have mold, such as compost piles, cut grass, and wooded areas.¹

Gain Control: Actions You Can Take^{1 2}

- If mold is growing in your home, you need to clean up the mold *and* fix the moisture problem. Mold growth can be removed from hard surfaces with commercial products, soap and water, or a bleach solution of no more than 1 cup of bleach in 1 gallon of water. If you choose to use bleach to clean up mold:
 - Never mix bleach with ammonia or other household cleaners. Mixing bleach with ammonia or other cleaning products will produce dangerous, toxic fumes.
 - Open windows and doors to provide fresh air.
 - Wear non-porous gloves and protective eye wear.
 - Be sure your home has enough ventilation. Use exhaust fans which vent outside your home in the kitchen and bathroom. Make sure your clothes dryer vents outside your home.
 - Fix any leaks in your home's roof, walls, or plumbing so mold does not have moisture to grow.
 - Dry damp or wet things completely within one to two days to keep mold from growing.
 - Maintain low indoor humidity, ideally between 30-50% relative humidity. Humidity levels can be measured by hygrometers, which are available at local hardware stores.
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Local Asthma Resources for Detroit Residents:

- Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, Michigan Chapter: (248) 406-4254
- Wayne Children's Healthcare Access Program (Wayne CHAP): (313) 863-2427
- Children's Hospital of Michigan (Asthma, Allergy, & Immunology): (313) 745-5437

¹http://www.cdc.gov/mold/dampness_facts.htm

²<http://www.epa.gov/asthma/molds.html>