

*Scientific Study***Scientists Say Household Mold Harms Respiratory Health**

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Indoor mold exposure is consistently associated with poor respiratory health, asthma, chemical sensitivity, and allergies according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Living in a damp or moldy home is also harmful to the health of children according to scientists at the Environmental Health Unit, NCPHP, Sofia, Bulgaria. Mold may cause stuffiness, eye irritation, wheezing, skin irritation, shortness of breath, rhinitis, nasal congestion, conjunctival inflammation, asthma, and fever.

Currently, there are no EPA regulations or standards for airborne mold contaminants, so it's up to individuals to control mold in the home.

Mold spores grow when they land on a damp surface. Many surfaces can be contaminated with mold, including wood, paper, carpet, and ceiling tiles. To control mold:

- Dry water damaged areas and items within 24-48 hours.
- Get rid of the excess water or moisture.
- Fix leaky plumbing and other sources of water intrusion.
- Ventilate bathrooms and other moist areas to reduce indoor humidity by opening windows and using exhaust fans.
- Use exhaust fans during cooking, dishwashing, and cleaning.
- Insulate to reduce condensation.
- Adjust refrigerator settings to reduce condensation.

In areas where there is a perpetual moisture problem, do not install carpeting (i.e., by drinking fountains, by classroom sinks, or on basement floors with leaks or frequent condensation).

When looking for a new home, it is important to inspect it carefully for mold. Mold can hide inside walls, under carpets, and in attics. Passing a professional mold inspection should be included as a contingency on an offer to buy a home.

People with chemical sensitivities need to be extremely careful around mold and should not occupy a home that has had a mold infestation.

Living in areas where there is relatively little moisture is not always adequate protection from mold. Dried mold spores also cause health problems. Phoenix, AZ is an example of a deceptively dry area with a high count of dried mold spores.

With a little forethought and prevention, home sweet home can be home safe home too.

References

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