

For more information

AirNow - Local Air Quality Conditions

<https://airnow.gov/>

APHC - Mold & Indoor Air Quality

<https://phc.amedd.army.mil/topics/workplacehealth/ih/Pages/Indoor-Air-Quality-Mold.aspx>

California Department of Public Health

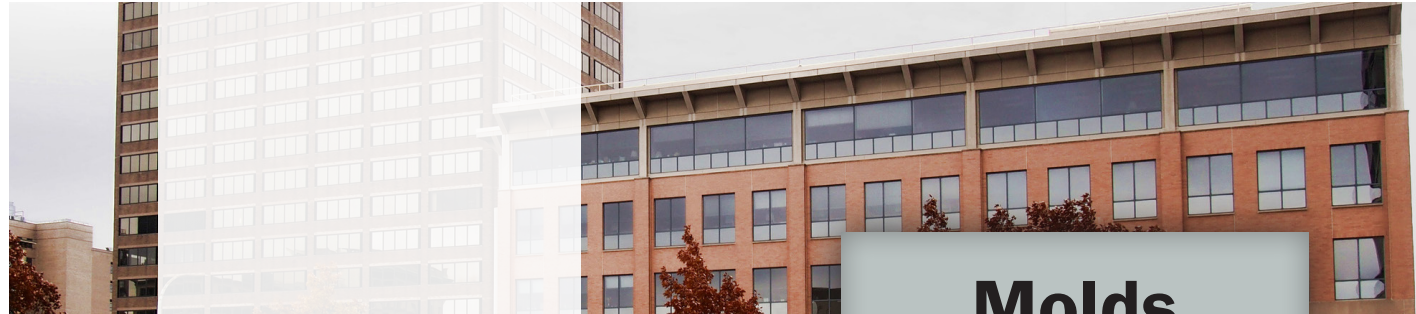
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CCDCPHP/DEODC/OHB/HESIS/CDPH%20Document%20Library/molds.pdf>

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<https://www.cdc.gov/mold/default.htm>

Environmental Protection Agency

<https://www.epa.gov/mold>

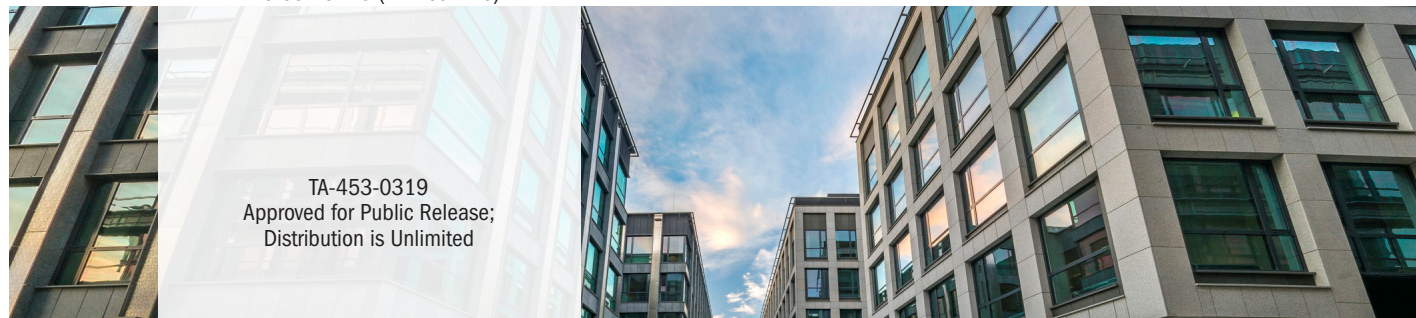


Molds at Home and Work



U.S. Army Public Health Center
8252 Blackhawk Road
Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD 21010-5403
1.800.222.9698
410.652.5175 (24 hour line)

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What is mold?

Molds are forms of fungi that are found naturally both indoors and outdoors. Excessive moisture can make mold growth a problem in some buildings. Molds produce spores, which are released into the air and can cause allergy symptoms in some people. Molds come in a variety of colors, including green, black, white, brown and orange. Mold sometimes appears fuzzy, but often appears in slimy streaks. There is often an earthy or mildew odor around mold.

What causes mold to grow inside?

Molds thrive in moist environments and need to have a food source. Molds tend to grow well on cloth, wood, and wallboard but can grow on virtually any surface. When there is moisture that is not dried promptly (for example, a burst pipe or leaking windows in rain storms), molds can reproduce quickly. In humid environments, keeping surfaces dry enough to prevent mold growth can be challenging.

How do I get exposed to mold?

Molds produce spores, which are too small to be visible without a microscope, and small enough to travel through the air and into your lungs. You can also be exposed to mold by skin contact.

How can molds affect my health?

Mold's color is NOT an indicator of its potential to cause negative health effects. The most common health problems from molds are allergy-like symptoms, including runny nose, scratchy throat, itchy eyes, sneezing, and in more severe cases, wheezing and coughing. Wheezing should be evaluated by a healthcare provider. Allergy-like symptoms from mold are more common in people who already have allergy problems. Some people exposed to mold report flu-like symptoms, dizziness and other non-allergic symptoms. Molds can produce toxins ("mycotoxins") however, research so far has not shown a connection between mycotoxins and other symptoms.

What can I do about molds in my house?

Any obvious water leaks or similar sources of moisture should be corrected and dried within 24-48 hours to prevent mold growth. Visible mold on hard surfaces such as tile or vinyl should be removed through surface cleaning with a detergent or soap solution. Mold on porous materials such as ceiling tile or wallboard requires replacement of the contaminated materials, and may need professional removal with appropriate worker protection. If you live in government housing, you should contact your facility manager for assistance.

What can I do about molds in my workplace?

Surface cleaning of hard surfaces should be carried out as previously stated. Visible mold in your work area should be reported to your supervisor, who will bring it to the attention of the industrial hygienist and facility manager. Mold in the work area should be removed, and causes of the growth, such as water leaks must be corrected to prevent further growth. Any obvious water leaks or similar sources of moisture should be corrected promptly to prevent mold growth.

What if I have symptoms I think are related to mold?

You should make note of the timing of the symptoms and see a healthcare provider for evaluation. If you think you may be exposed at your workplace, speak with your supervisor, and make an appointment with occupational health. If you are concerned that you may be exposed at home, make an appointment with your primary healthcare provider.