

A serious health hazard for you and your family

What is mold?

Mold is a simple, microscopic organism, present virtually everywhere, indoors and outdoors.

For molds to grow and reproduce, they need moisture and a food source (any organic material, such as leaves, wood, paper, or dirt.)

Because molds grow by digesting the organic material, they gradually destroy whatever they grow on. Sometimes, new molds grow on old mold colonies.

Molds release countless tiny lightweight spores that travel through the air. If they land on a damp area the spores begin to grow and digest what they are attached to.

Where mold may appear

Mold needs dampness to grow so it will be found in basements, bathrooms, kitchens and after a water leak or flood.

Mold growth on surfaces can often be seen in the form of discoloration, frequently green, gray, brown, or black but also white and other colors.

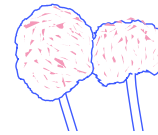
Mold may appear on ceiling tiles floors, windowsills, insulation, carpet, furniture, behind ductwork and walls (including wallpaper) and in cardboard or paper.

Mold and indoor air quality

Mold spores

Molds release microscopic spores that travel through the air. It is common to find mold spores in indoor air although most of the airborne spores found indoors, where there is no mold infestation come, from outdoor sources.

Mold spores generally cause health problems when they are present in large numbers due to active or recent mold growth within the home, office or school.



Mold Spores

Mold micotoxins

Certain types of molds, such as *Stachybotris chartarum*, may produce compounds called mycotoxins that have toxic properties.

Mycotoxins are not always produced, and whether a mold produces mycotoxins while growing in a building depends on what the mold is growing on, conditions such as temperature, pH, humidity or other unknown factors.

When mycotoxins are present, they occur in both living and dead mold spores and may be found in materials that have become contaminated with molds.

While *Stachybotrys* is growing, a wet slime layer covers its spores, preventing them from becoming airborne. However, when the mold dies and dries up, air currents or physical handling can cause spores to become airborne