



# Five Things You Should Know About Mold

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## MOLD IS EVERYWHERE

...and this isn't a bad thing! There are over 100,000 types of mold, and many of them are beneficial to us (like those found in many antibiotics which heal us, or those we choose to eat, like bleu cheese). Even the "problem" molds can be inconsequential in a normal environment. Mold levels are constantly changing, and even the most concerning molds are found everywhere at scant levels. However, when extensive mold growth takes place indoors, the result can be concerning.

## HOW DOES MOLD GROWTH DEVELOP?

Mold needs two things to grow: a food source and moisture. Mold spores are always floating around in the air, both indoors and outdoors. They don't typically become a problem until they land in an area that encourages growth - namely, a place with excessive moisture. Mold growth can start in as little as 24-48 hours in situations of leaks, or water damage, especially if the cause is not corrected.

## WHAT ARE THE HEALTH EFFECTS?

Most mold spores can cause allergenic reactions, however there are few that can also potentially cause pathogenic or even toxic reactions. People most affected by these are young children, the elderly, or people whose immune systems are compromised. The good news is that those more concerning molds are typically few and far between.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE A PROBLEM?

While there are home test kits that you can use to test for mold, these are generally not reliable as the sample will always come back positive (because mold is everywhere). Having a trained professional conduct a mold test will leave you with much more thorough results including potential causes of the problem, the types of mold found, what levels they were found in, whether or not there is cause for concern, and an action plan to remediate the problem.

## I HAVE A MOLD PROBLEM...WHAT DO I DO?

Most importantly, don't panic! Based on your lab results, a trained professional will be able to recommend a course of action. Because not all molds require professional remediation, this could be something as simple as a store bought mold/mildew remover. In cases where professional remediation is recommended, we can refer contractors to help you with your problem. The contractor will be able to detail the scope of work as well as recommending that you correct the cause of the problem first. Furthermore, they can help you determine the best way to prevent it from happening again. Once the work has been completed, make sure to have a clearance test performed to ensure that there are no lingering issues.