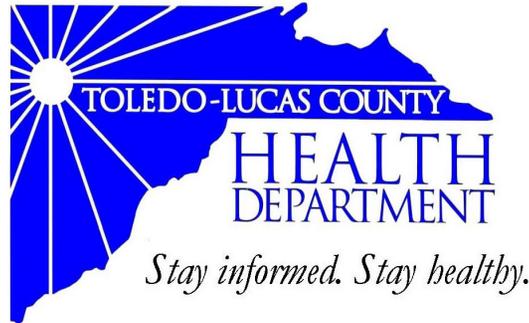


Mold and Your Health

We are all exposed to many kinds of mold both inside and outside the home. However, some people are more sensitive to molds or have mold allergies. For these people, molds can cause nasal stuffiness, throat irritation, coughing, 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, may get serious infections in their lungs when they are exposed to mold. These people should stay away from areas likely to have mold. A link between other adverse health effects, has not been proven.

*Remember, to prevent mold:

Keep it clean and keep it dry



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MOLD IN YOUR HOME



MOLD AND YOU

Mold and Your Home

There is always **some** mold everywhere—in the air and on many surfaces. Mold is found both indoors and outdoors. Mold can enter your home through open doorways, windows, vents, and heating and air conditioning systems. Mold in the air outside can also attach itself to clothing, shoes, bags, and pets and can be carried inside.

Mold growth, which often looks like spots, can be many different colors, and can smell musty.

Mold grows well on paper products, cardboard, ceiling tiles, wood products or on surfaces coated with the slightest amount of food, grease or soil. Mold can also grow in dust, paints, wallpaper, insulation, drywall, carpet, fabric, and upholstery.

Mold grows best in warm temperatures where there is moisture, such as water leaks, flooding or where there is high levels of humidity or condensation.

Prevent Mold Growth

Mold needs water, nutrients, and a place to grow. Inside your home you can prevent mold growth by:

- Keeping the humidity levels between 40% and 60%. Use an air conditioner or dehumidifier during humid months
- Promptly fix leaky roofs, windows, and pipes
- Thoroughly clean and dry out your home after flooding
- Ventilating shower, laundry, and cooking areas
- Add mold inhibitors to paints before painting
- Clean bathrooms with mold-killing products
- Remove or replace carpets and upholstery that have been soaked and cannot be dried promptly

Getting Rid of Mold

If you can see or smell mold, a health risk may be present. It is not necessary to know the type of mold growing in your home. No matter what type of mold is present, you need to remove it. Since the effect of mold on people can vary greatly, either because of the amount or the type of mold, you can not rely on sampling to know your health risk.

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 1 1/4 cups bleach to 1 gallon of water.

You should wear gloves and protective clothing when removing mold. The area being disinfected should be well ventilated. Individuals not associated with the clean-up should be kept away from the area. Consider buying a respirator if the area being disinfected is large or will take a long time.

- Remove and discard mold contaminated items such as drywall, ceiling tiles, cardboard, gypsum board, and other items containing cellulose.
- Scrub the mold infected area with a non-ammonia based soap or detergent and hot water. Rinse with clean water and let dry.
- Disinfect the mold infected area with the solution of bleach. The area must be kept wet with the bleach for 10-15 minutes to kill the mold.
- Allow the area to dry for two–three days.
- Areas that will need re-painted must first be primed with a primer that will effectively stop further growth of mold spores.
- Reinspect for emerging mold growth regularly.