

Moisture Buildup and Mold Growth

Causes behind the problem

Mold can thrive in any place where there's an excess of moisture (e.g., humidity in the air, condensation on windows or water leaks) and presence of organic material (e.g., natural carpet fibers, drywall or wood).

Signs of mold growth include musty odors, condensation on windows, discoloration of walls or ceilings, loose drywall tape and wood warping.

Health effects

Allergic responses to mold include hay-fever symptoms, such as sneezing, runny nose, red eyes and skin rash. Molds can also aggravate asthma.

How to manage mold

Things you can do

- Keep relative humidity within a range of 30% and 60%
- Make sure your home is properly ventilated
- Repair leaks in your roof or plumbing within 48 hours
- Remove mold from hard surfaces such as ceramic tile by cleaning it with dishwashing liquid and then following with a solution of bleach and warm water
- Immediately replace mold-damaged materials, such as floor mats or comforters
- Check around air-handling units (air conditioners, furnaces) for stagnant water
- Turn on your air conditioner and/or dehumidifier during summer months, and use the "auto fan" setting to reduce humidity and save energy
- Regularly wipe down shower curtain liners
- Avoid the use of carpets/rugs in rooms below ground level
- Scrub all walls, floors and other mold-contaminated hard surfaces. First, use a mild detergent solution, and then follow with warm water and bleach. For large areas of mold growth, more drastic measures may be needed.

NOTE: If there is mold growth in your home, it's important to clean up the mold and fix the water problem. If you address the mold, but don't fix the water problem, then, most likely, the mold problem will come back.

Source: www.epa.gov