

Indoor Mold Exposure

Basic Facts about Mold

- Molds are very common in buildings and homes.
- The color of mold is NOT an indicator of type or health threat.
- The most important factor in controlling mold is eliminating sources of moisture and lowering humidity.
- Mold cannot grow without moisture.

Testing for Mold

- The CDC does not recommend or perform routine sampling for molds.
- There are no set standards for judging what is an acceptable, tolerable, or normal quantity of mold.
- It is not necessary to determine what type of mold you may have growing in your home.
- All molds should be treated the same with respect to potential health risks and removal.

“Black Mold”-Stachybotrys

chartarum “Toxic Black Mold” refers to a specific species of mold. It is a greenish-black mold that often grows on materials with a high cellulose content, such as fiberboard, gypsum board, and paper.

At present, it has not been proven that is associated with specific health symptoms, but it may cause nonspecific health symptoms like other molds.

Symptoms of Mold Exposure

Moldy environments may cause a variety of health effects or none at all; mold sensitivity varies among people. People with allergies may be more sensitive to molds. Sometimes symptoms can be immediate or delayed. The most common symptoms are:

- stuffy nose
- sore throat
- coughing
- red or itchy eyes
- skin rash

Wheezing should be evaluated by a healthcare provider. Molds can also cause asthma attacks in people with asthma who are allergic to mold. Symptoms other than the allergic or irritant type are not commonly reported as a result of inhaling mold.

Long-term Effects of Mold

Recent studies have suggested a potential link of early mold exposure to development of asthma in some children, particularly those with a genetic susceptibility to asthma. Those with immune suppression (e.g., HIV infection, cancer patients taking chemotherapy, and people who have received an organ or stem cell transplant) or underlying lung disease are more susceptible to fungal infections.

Things to Discuss with your Healthcare Provider

If you believe you or a family member are ill because of exposure to mold, take note of the timing of symptoms, and see a healthcare provider for evaluation.

For More Information

APHC - Mold & Indoor Air Quality:

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

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/mold/default.htm>

Environmental Protection Agency: <https://www.epa.gov/mold>

Munson Army Health Center Appointment Line: (913) 684-6250



Lead-based Paint in Military Housing

A Fact Sheet for Military Families

- Many homes built before 1978 have lead-based paint.
- Lead from paint chips and dust can pose serious health hazards.
- Lead-contaminated paint is not a hazard if it is contained under other coats of paint that are intact and undisturbed
- No safe blood lead level in children has been identified.
- The adverse effects of lead exposure cannot be corrected once they occur, but there are treatments to remove lead from the body before it causes harm.

What Should You Do if You Think Your Child has been in Contact with Lead?

- Schedule an appointment with your child's health care provider for a lead exposure screening
- A blood lead test is the only definitive way to find out if your child has a high lead level.

Reduce the Risk

- Be aware of the information on potential lead hazards that was given to you when moving in.
 - Make sure your child does not have access to peeling paint or painted surfaces they could chew.
 - Quickly report peeling paint and water damage to housing maintenance.
 - Keep your home clean and dust-free, particularly around painted areas where friction can generate dust, such as doors, windows, and drawers. Wipe these areas frequently with a wet sponge or rag to remove paint chips or dust.
 - Wash children's hands, bottles, pacifiers and toys often.
- For additional information, contact the Directorate of Public Works, Environmental Division - (913) 684-5646 or the Munson Army Health Center, Industrial Hygiene Section - (913) 684-6547.
 - Resources:
 - Army Public Health Center - <https://phc.amedd.army.mil/topics/workplacehealth/ih/Pages/Lead.aspx>
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention - <https://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/default.htm>
 - Environmental Protection Agency - <https://www.epa.gov/lead>