



# Controlling Mold for Your Family's Health



**Mold** is part of the natural environment, but when it grows in your home, it can be a real health hazard. Mold spores produce **allergens, respiratory irritants**, and in some cases, potentially toxic substances called **mycotoxins!**



**Problems** resulting from mold include **asthma, sneezing, runny nose, red eyes, and difficulty breathing**. **People with sensitive respiratory systems, children, the elderly and pregnant women** are most likely to be impacted by mold.

**Molds grow in** showers, bathrooms, window moldings, basements, garbage pails, mattresses, humidifiers, vaporizers, furniture cushions and indoor plant soil and carpet laid on bare floor (because concrete sucks in moisture from the ground which then dampens the carpet).



**Black Mold** is very rare but very dangerous. It is likely to only occur if a large amount of water has been in/on a surface for an extended period of time. It can be identified by its **sliminess** and **tendency to grow in a circular pattern**.

**Recognizing Mold** You can recognize mold by **sight** (are walls and ceilings discolored? do they look damaged by water?) or **smell** (do you smell a musty, earthy or foul smell?). Search for the source by looking for leaks or moisture build up.

To **remove mold growth**, use either of these non-toxic, easy recipes:

- 1) Spray the area with 1 part hydrogen peroxide and 2 parts water, let dry and wipe clean.\*
- 2) Spray the area with 1 part water and 1 part white vinegar. Let dry and wipe clean.\*
- 3) Spray the area with 2 teaspoons tea tree oil and 2 cups water, let dry and wipe clean.\*

*\*Repeat steps, if necessary.*



When removing mold be sure to wear gloves and a face mask.  
•Rubber gloves cost \$1-\$5 per pair; "N-95 Face Mask" costs about \$5 for a double pack

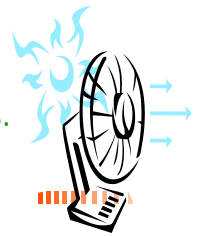


**If the area is larger than 3ft x 3ft, contact a professional.**  
**Remember: painting over mold does not make it go away!**  
**See reverse side for tips on PREVENTING mold!**

# The key to preventing mold in your home is moisture control.

Follow these easy steps:

1. Quickly **fix** any water problems such as **leaks** in the roofs, walls or plumbing.
2. **Regularly clean areas** that have been affected by mold to prevent growth, and **remove mold immediately** if it does grow.
3. **Open windows** at least a few minutes each day to create fresh air flow.
4. **Open your curtains** to allow sunlight into the home.
5. Keep furniture at least **1 inch** from walls to allow airflow.
6. Make sure **fans** in the kitchen and bathroom are **fully functional** and that you **cover food when cooking** so steam does not escape. Place a fan in any area with a mold problem.
7. **Air conditioners and dehumidifiers can help to remove moisture from the air.** They're best used during humid months and in damp spaces, like basements.
8. **Maintain humidity levels at less than 60%** (40%-50% is best).
9. **Suggested products:** •"Cedar Fresh Dry Pack": \$5 •Eva-Dry Mini Dehumidifier: \$34  
•Humidistat: \$7 •Switch Plate Hygro Thermometers: \$22 •Hygro thermometer: \$3



## Mold Management Resources



### Josiah Hill III Clinic

[www.jhillclinic.org](http://www.jhillclinic.org) (503) 802-7389

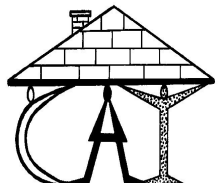
Provides outreach and education on indoor environmental health and lead poisoning prevention. Offers mold and green cleaning workshops and free blood lead screenings at various community centers throughout Portland. Call to arrange a Healthy Homes workshop or visit website for info.



### Multnomah County Health Department, Environmental Health Section

[www.mchealthinspect.org/healthyhomes](http://www.mchealthinspect.org/healthyhomes) (503) 988-3400

Provides a Healthy Homes education, inspections, and services with the goal of decreasing hazards.



### Community Alliance of Tenants

[oregoncat.org](http://oregoncat.org) Renter's Rights Hotline: (503) 288-0130

Extensive resources for tenants and renters, including workshops, home hazard assessments, and the renter's rights hotline.



### Environmental Protection Agency

[www.epa.gov/iaq/molds/moldguide](http://www.epa.gov/iaq/molds/moldguide) (206) 553-2584

Visit above weblink for a more extensive guide to mold, moisture and your home.