

## Molds around the house

Molds are found both indoors and outdoors. They can be black, white, green, fuzzy, or slimy. Molds thrive in areas of the house where there is excess moisture, such as bathrooms, kitchens, or laundry rooms. Potted plants, window sills, and pillows may get moldy, and water leaks may cause mold growth in the wall or carpet of a home.

Molds release tiny mold spores to reproduce. The spores may trigger allergies or asthma or irritate the nose and throat. Molds may produce small amounts of toxins, called mycotoxins. Animals have been poisoned from eating moldy hay filled with mycotoxins. However, breathing indoor air in typical homes with moderate mold growth is not known to cause poisoning from the mycotoxins.

Small mold growth, such as that around a tub, can be safely cleaned up using over-the-counter dilute bleach cleaners, with adequate fresh air. Larger areas are best referred to professionals.

\*Resources (accessed 11/15/2005)

EPA Indoor Environmental Asthma Triggers – Molds  
<http://www.epa.gov/iaq/asthma/molds.html>

American Academy of Pediatrics. Statement on Allergy Tips  
<http://www.aap.org/advocacy/archives/septallergy.htm>

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology. Tips to remember: indoor allergens  
<http://www.aaaai.org/patients/publicedmat/tips/indoorallergens.stm>