



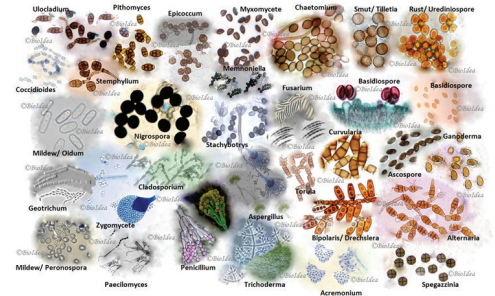
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## MOLD AVOIDANCE

Molds give off spores that get into the air and when inhaled by someone allergic to them can produce symptoms such as a runny or stuffy nose, coughing, or itchy watery eyes. Molds are found in outdoor air and can enter your home any time you open a door or window. Any house can develop a mold problem with the right conditions. Molds like to grow on wallboard, wood, or fabrics, but they will grow any place. They thrive in damp basements and closets, bathrooms (especially showers), places where fresh food is stored, refrigerator drip trays, house plants, air conditioners, humidifiers, garbage pails, mattresses, upholstered furniture, and old foam rubber pillows.



Mold spores can be inhaled outdoors while cutting grass, raking leaves, or hiking in the woods. Outdoor mold counts usually peak during summer months although rainy or damp weather often causes molds to thrive, Dry, windy days can carry mold spores far distances.

### Mold Tips:

- ▶ Clean bathrooms, kitchens, and basements regularly and keep them well aired.
- ▶ Do not use humidifiers.
- ▶ Use dehumidifiers in damp areas with the humidity level set for less than 50 percent but above 25 percent. Drain and clean the unit regularly.
- ▶ Clean visible mold on walls, floors, and ceilings using a 5 percent bleach solution and detergent. If you are sensitive to cleaning products, avoid their direct use or have someone else handle them.
- ▶ Fix leaky faucets and pipes.
- ▶ Remove or limit carpeting in the home. If possible, replace it with hardwood, vinyl, or linoleum floors that are easier to clean.
- ▶ Limit the number of indoor plants that may harbor molds in the potting soil. Also avoid dried flowers, which may contain mold.
- ▶ Change air conditioning and furnace filters every three months, and use filters with a MERV rating of 8 to 12. A MERV rating tells you how well the filter can remove dust from the air as it passes through the filter.