

## ABOUT MOULD

Mould is an organism that is present in moist places, outdoors and indoors. Mould is a fungus which grows by digesting plant or animal matter, such as leaves, dirt and food. It spreads by releasing tiny, lightweight spores that travel through the air. Symptoms of a mould allergy may include: wheezing; stuffy, runny nose; itchy, watery eyes; rash or hives.

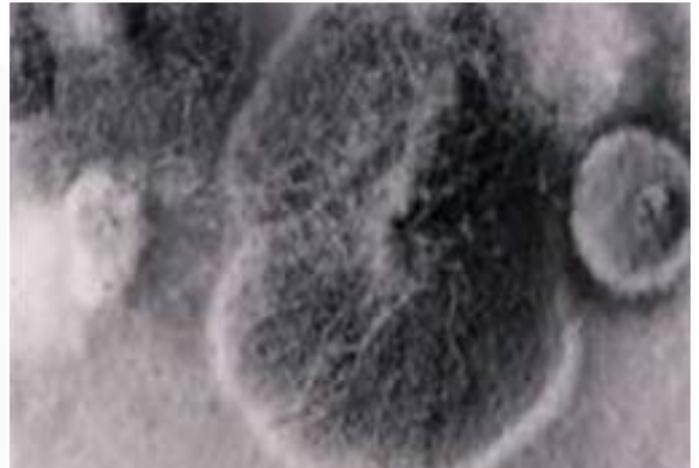
The allergy occurs because the immune system of affected individuals, for reasons not fully understood, misinterprets a substance as a disease agent and begins producing a type of antibody against it, called immunoglobulin E (IgE). The IgE produced during this response binds to basophils in the bloodstream and to a similar type of cell called mast cells in the tissues. When a person again encounters the allergen, these basophils and mast cells release histamine, which results in allergic symptoms.

### How can mould be avoided?

Mould will grow in areas that are moist, dark and poorly ventilated with high humidity. Common areas are bathrooms, basements, and outdoor gardens. Some ways you may decrease your exposure to mould include:

#### Bathroom / Kitchen

- Locate and repair any leaking plumbing, or source of water seepage.
- Decrease humidity by providing good ventilation, opening windows, using exhaust fans.
- Wash towels and bath mats regularly, put them outside in direct sunlight during the day
- Wash mould off hard surfaces such as the shower, toilet, bath or walls and allow to dry completely
- Keep fridge areas clean
- Ensure food is fresh.
- Use paint containing mould inhibitor
- Check inside walls and existing insulation for signs of mould sometimes you can smell mould without seeing it. Any moisture inside a wall needs to be treated by removal and replacement.



#### Bedrooms / Living areas

- Use air-conditioning or humidifiers to decrease humidity in the house.
- Open windows when possible.
- Regularly wash furniture and linen that is exposed to moisture. Use waterproof mattress protectors when required.
- Add insulation to walls, roof and floors where possible.
- Remove and replace any wet, mouldy carpet. Do not install carpet in areas exposed to moisture.