



MOULD

Mould (mildew), mushrooms, and yeast are all types of fungi. Fungi are found both indoors and outdoors and many kinds of mould are found in Queensland and Australia. Mould can be many different colours, it may look furry, slimy, or powdery and some mould has a musty, stale, or earthy odour. Find out how mould grows, exposure and health effects, and prevention and cleaning.

Mould growth

Mould usually grows in damp places, such as bathrooms and basements and needs the right conditions and environment:

- Mould needs water and food.
- It can grow almost anywhere there is water, high humidity, or damp conditions.
- Mould grows faster in warm temperatures and high humidity.
- Mould can feed on paper, fabric, wallpaper glue, sheet rock, wood, soap scum, leather, and many other surfaces.

How to clean mould

- ✓ Use soap and water to clean small areas of mould (less than one square meter) on walls or other hard surfaces as soon as you see it.
- ✓ Wear waterproof gloves.
- ✓ Dry the cleaned area completely.
- ✓ If the mould returns quickly or spreads, there may be an underlying problem such as a water leak. To stop mould, water problems must be fixed.
- ✓ If large areas of mould are present, you may need a professional mould cleaning company. Check the phone book for mould cleaning contractors.

Exposure and health effects

You could be exposed to mould if you:

- Breathe in mould particles that are disturbed or damaged.
- Breathe in the tiny spores (similar to seeds) that the mould may release into the air.
- Touch mould and get it on your skin.
- Eat mouldy or spoiled food.

The health effects of mould include:

- Allergic reactions.
- Asthma symptoms, hay fever, or other allergies.
- Cough, congestion, runny nose, and trouble breathing.

Severe reactions to mould may occur among workers exposed to large amounts of mould on the job, such as farmers working with mouldy hay.

If you think that you or your children have symptoms related to mould exposure, you should see a doctor. Keep in mind that many symptoms associated with mould exposure are also caused by many other illnesses.



Prevention

The best way is to remove water and moisture sources. Fixing leaks, drying damp areas, and removing humidity from the air (e.g. using a dehumidifier in basements or opening a window while taking a shower in bathrooms with no exhaust ventilation) will help stop mould growth and keep it from coming back.

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Mould in rental properties

Your landlord or building manager must keep your building in good condition so mould will not grow. This means repairing water leaks and correcting persistently high humidity levels. If you have a lot of mould (more than one square metre) or it keeps coming back after you have cleaned it, contact your landlord about the problem.

Useful links

- [Residential Tenancies Authority](#)
- <https://www.lgtoolbox.qld.gov.au/topics/health/mould>