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## Where Do Molds Grow?

Molds grow almost anywhere there is moisture, oxygen, and a source of a few other chemicals they need. Outside, they grow on rotting logs and fallen leaves, especially in moist, shady areas. In gardens, they can be found in compost piles and on certain grasses and weeds. The thatch of a lawn is rich in mold. Farms, grain bins, and silos are likely places to find mold. "Hot spots" of mold growth in the home include damp basements and closets, bathrooms, especially shower stalls, refrigerator drip trays, air conditioners, humidifiers, garbage pails, mattresses, upholstered furniture, and old pillows. Bakeries, breweries, barns, dairies, and greenhouses are favorite places for molds to grow. The work places of loggers, mill workers, carpenters, paper hangers, furniture repairers and mattress upholsterers may also contain many molds.

1. The allergy sufferer should avoid those "hot spots" mentioned earlier where molds tend to be concentrated. The lawn should be kept mowed and old leaves should be collected, but someone other than the allergic person should be responsible for these chores. If such work cannot be delegated, wearing a tightly fitting dust mask may greatly reduce exposure and resulting symptoms. Travel in the country on dry, windy days or while crops are being harvested, should be avoided as should walks through tall vegetation. A summer cabin closed up all winter is probably full of molds and should be aired out and cleaned before a mold-sensitive person stays there.
2. Around the home, a dehumidifier will help dry out the basement, but the water must be removed frequently to prevent mold growth in the machine. Central air conditioning and an air cleaner may also be useful in reducing indoor mold levels.
3. All areas of seepage or flooding heavy rains should be corrected. Concrete or cinder block basement walls should be made as waterproof as possible with appropriate repair.
4. Mold inhibiting chemicals or paints are useful. The paints are available in most commercial paint stores, while the chemicals may be obtained from certain druggists or building supply dealers. Trioxymethylene Powder and crystals of Paradichlorobenzene will effectively get rid of fungi in limited areas of the home. Treated spaces should be completely aired out before being used again. Silica gel, activated alumina, or calcium chloride will absorb moisture from the air and inhibit mold growth. These chemicals are safe for use in occupied parts of the home. One may use the preparation "captan" which is available from garden supply stores to remove mold from the soil of potted plants in the house.
5. Full strength bleach is an extremely effective fungicide which is both economical as well as long lasting. In bathrooms where ceramic tile surrounds the wall of a shower stall or a bath tub area, bleach may be applied full strength. The grout holding the tile in place should be dry (no shower for 12 hours) and the bathroom must be well ventilated. After 15 minutes the bleach may be washed off. On the underside of the water tank of the toilet, bleaching may be applied full strength using a pump mist arrangement.
6. Keep closets aired or ventilated, or you may keep one of the drying agent packages (silica gel, etc.) hung in the closet; this applies especially to storage closets. Moth preventatives do not prevent mold growth.
7. Frequent cleaning and other measures to get rid of house dust will eliminate another source of molds. The clothes dryer should always be vented to the outside of the home.

These measures are an adjunct in therapy, along with administration of mold antigen as a vaccine. Avoidance of contact with the mold is an integral part of the treatment.