



1. What are molds and where can I find them?

Molds are tiny organisms that break down dead material and recycle nutrients in the environment. They can be found in most outdoor and indoor environments. Molds need only a food source (wood, paper, or dirt) and moisture to grow. Molds can be seen in a variety of colors such as green, gray, brown, black, white, and red.

2. How might I be exposed to molds?

As molds grow and reproduce, they release tiny spores that travel through the air. People are exposed to molds when they breathe in these mold spores. Everyone is exposed to some amount of molds every day. People can be exposed to molds by touching materials or eating foods containing mold.

3. How can molds affect my health?

Exposure to mold spores can cause allergic reactions (often referred to as hay fever) in some people, especially those with known environmental allergies or asthma. Infants, young children, the elderly, and people with immune diseases or cancers are more likely to develop severe symptoms from exposure to molds.

4. How can I reduce my exposure to molds?

- Repair any signs of water leaks or water entering indoor spaces.
- Begin cleaning up the molds after the moisture source is fixed and excess water has been removed.
- Minor amounts of mold growth can be cleaned with dilute bleach and a pair of dishwashing gloves. More extensive mold growth may need to be cleaned professionally.

Sources

1. *Molds*. L.A. County Department of Public Health. <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/eh>
2. *Mold*. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <http://cdc.gov/Environmental>
3. *Molds*. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. <http://epa.gov/mold>

For additional resources, please visit the L.A. County Department of Public Health website:
<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov>.