Watch video

HEALTH® METRIC

Making the complex simple

ALL INCLUSIVE TEST KIT

MOLD TEST

For surface and material testing

EPA approved testing methodology

3 tape-lift or bulk samples analyzed

- AIHA-LAP, LLC Accredited Lab
- Free return shipping
- Lab fees included

MADE IN ★★★★★ THE USA

MOLD TESTING GUIDE

Thank you for choosing the Health Metric Mold Test Kit. This all-inclusive testing kit makes surface and material testing for mold easy. Just follow the included step-by-step instructions and find out specifically what type of mold, if any, is present in the samples.

The following guide gives you a brief overview of mold, including some helpful tips and techniques for the prevention and removal of mold. For more information and helpful video instructions, scan the QR code on the cover page, or visit ***health-metric.com/mold.***

Should you have any questions, feel free to get in touch. We are here to help!

Phone: 1-800-324-5928

health-metric.com/mold
support@health-metric.com
mold@alphaenergylabs.com

This test kit is made in partnership with Alpha Energy Laboratories and Moldlab, Ltd. Mold analysis is completed by a Moldlab, Ltd. (ID 154782), who is accredited by the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) Laboratory Accreditation Programs, LLC in the EMLAP accreditation program for Bulk - Direct Examination Field of Testing as documented by the Scope of Accreditation Certificate and associated Scope.

3 COMMON TEST KIT ERRORS TO AVOID

1 READ ALL INSTRUCTIONS

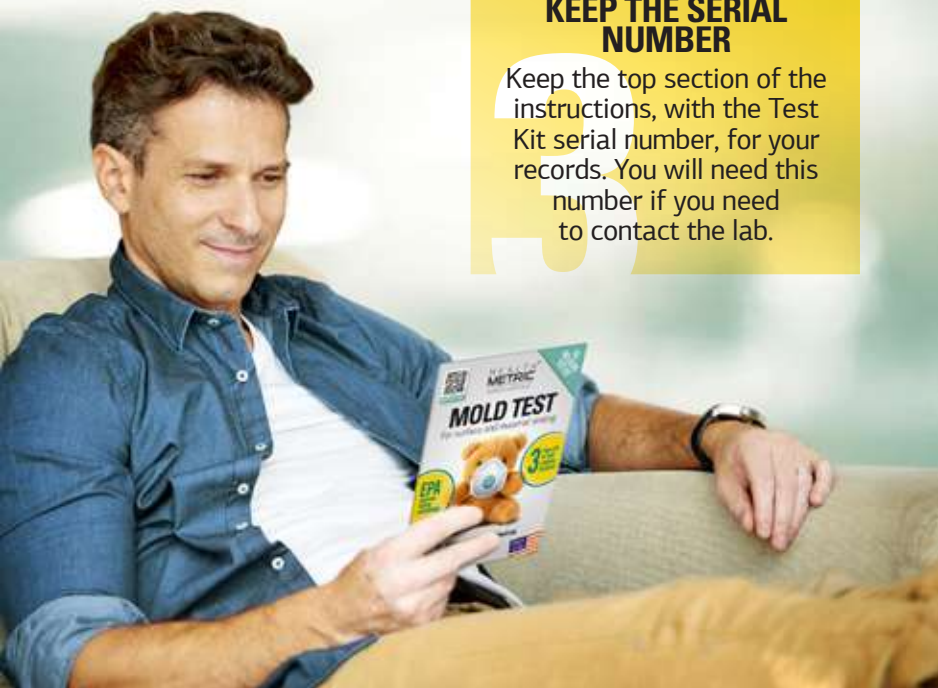
Please read the instructions carefully before beginning the test. This will eliminate nearly 95% of the errors that may occur.

2 DO NOT CRUSH THE SPORES

When collecting spores using the lift tape, do not press too hard, as this will crush the spores. Crushed spores cannot be identified.

3 KEEP THE SERIAL NUMBER

Keep the top section of the instructions, with the Test Kit serial number, for your records. You will need this number if you need to contact the lab.



WHAT ARE MOLDS?

Molds are fungi that can be found both indoors and outdoors, and are part of the natural environment. Outdoors, molds work in nature to break down dead organic matter, but indoors, molds destroy the materials they grow on and can cause a number of health issues.

Molds grow best in warm, damp, and humid conditions, and reproduce by means of tiny spores. These spores are invisible to the naked eye and float through the air. Some common indoor molds include Cladosporium, Penicillium, Alternaria, and Aspergillus.

WHERE ARE MOLDS FOUND?

Mold can enter your home through open doorways, windows, vents, and heating and air conditioning systems. As mold growth is encouraged by warm and humid conditions, it can be found where humidity levels are high, such as in basements or showers.

Although bathrooms (particularly shower stalls) and basements are typical moist areas prone to mold growth, any moist areas in the home can be moldy. Drywall, ceiling tiles, carpets, furniture, ductwork, roofing, paneling, wallpaper, under sinks, and the areas around plumbing pipes are examples of areas in the home that can harbor mold.

HOW DO MOLDS AFFECT PEOPLE?

If mold spores land on a wet or damp spot and begin growing, they can produce allergens, irritants, and in some cases, potentially toxic substances (mycotoxins). Inhaling or touching mold or mold spores may cause allergic reactions, leading to symptoms such as a blocked nose, wheezing, and red or itchy eyes or skin.

Some people, such as those with allergies to molds, asthma sufferers, or people with a weakened immune system, may have more intense reactions. In some individuals, exposure to mold or dampness has been linked to the development of asthma.

"TOXIC MOLD" AND "BLACK MOLD"

The term "toxic mold" is not accurate. While certain molds can produce toxins, the molds themselves are not toxic or poisonous. The hazards presented by molds that may produce mycotoxins should be considered the same as those caused by other common molds.

Similarly, there is no single type of mold called "black mold" – many molds are black. When people use the term, they are usually referring to Stachybotrys chartarum (S. chartarum).

However, there seems to be no strong scientific evidence to suggest that exposure to S. chartarum is more dangerous than exposure to any other type of mold. Therefore, people should remove any mold growth in the home and prevent it from growing back.

WHY SHOULD YOU TEST FOR MOLD?

It is impossible to say for certain whether something that looks like mold is actually mold just by visually inspecting it. Even professional inspectors collect samples they believe to be mold, only to find they are made of dirt, or are caused by discoloration. The following are some reasons why people test for mold:

Proof: To be able to provide proof of a mold problem in an apartment, for a real estate transaction, or for some other reason. For example, you might be able to force the complex to hire a building inspector or properly remediate the issue. For a real estate transaction, you may be able to force the seller to solve the problem or prove to the buyer that there is not an issue.

DIY or professional cleaning: To determine whether you want to take care of the problem yourself or hire a professional.

Allergic symptoms: To find out if mold could potentially be the cause of allergic symptoms. Although it is not all that is needed for a diagnosis, you may want to discuss the results with your physician.

Other: To identify the species of mold, to find where mold is growing, to confirm that mold has been removed fully, and more.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), it is generally not necessary to identify the species of mold growing in a residence, and no matter what type of mold is present, you should arrange for its removal.

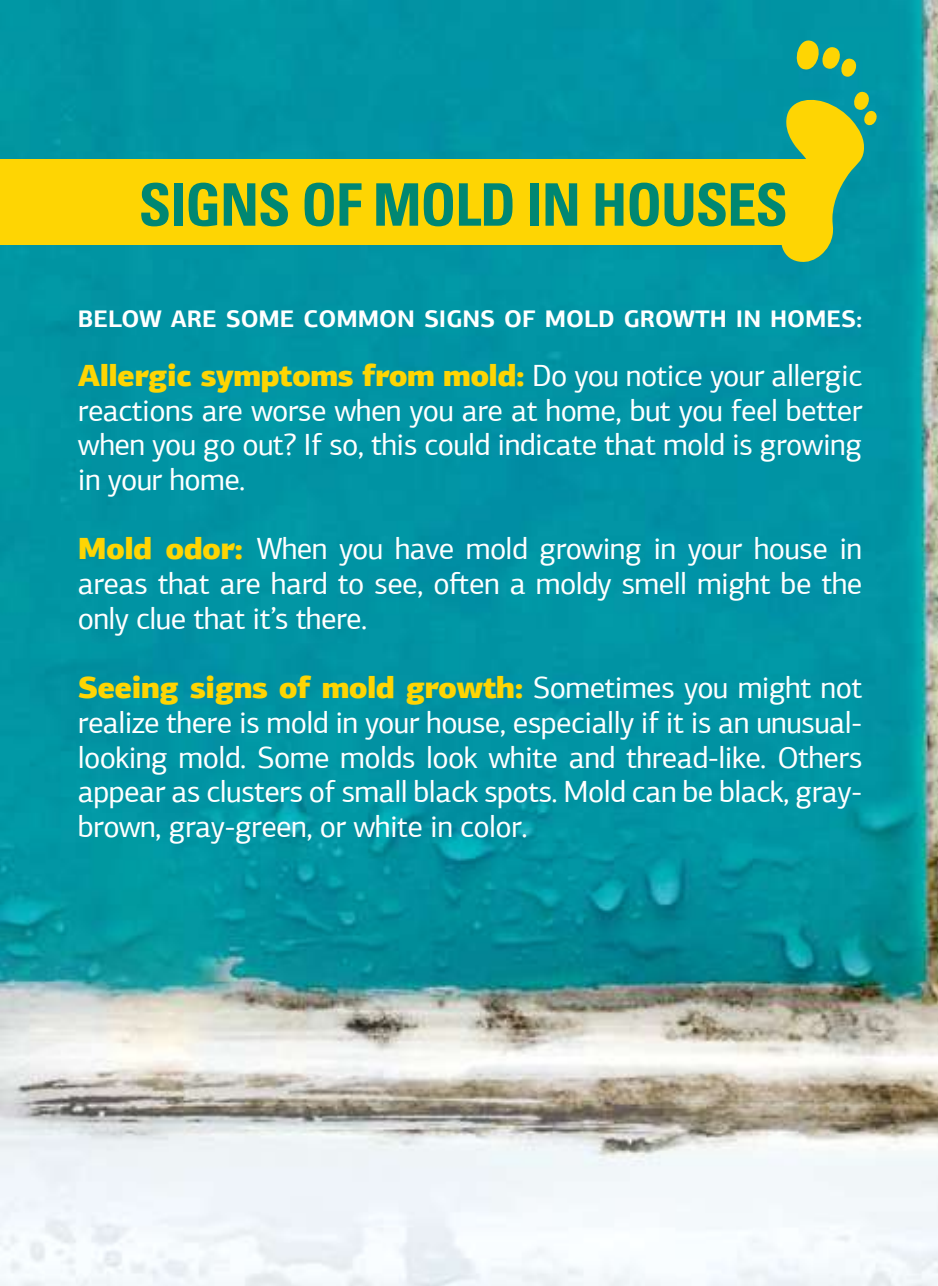
SIGNS OF MOLD IN HOUSES

BELOW ARE SOME COMMON SIGNS OF MOLD GROWTH IN HOMES:

Allergic symptoms from mold: Do you notice your allergic reactions are worse when you are at home, but you feel better when you go out? If so, this could indicate that mold is growing in your home.

Mold odor: When you have mold growing in your house in areas that are hard to see, often a moldy smell might be the only clue that it's there.

Seeing signs of mold growth: Sometimes you might not realize there is mold in your house, especially if it is an unusual-looking mold. Some molds look white and thread-like. Others appear as clusters of small black spots. Mold can be black, gray-brown, gray-green, or white in color.



Water problems: If you have had any long-term moisture problems in your house, it is usually inevitable that they will have led to mold growth. Some signs that you have a moisture problem include water stains or discoloration on walls, floors, or ceilings. Other signs of a moisture problem are surface abnormalities like peeling, bubbling, or cracking of the paint or wallpaper.

Water leaks: Mold problems in homes are usually created by leaks. However, mold growth caused by leaks can often be hidden. If the leak was behind a wall or other surface, then any mold will probably be hidden behind the surface too.

Flooding: If your house has been flooded in the past, it is likely that mold will have started to grow. Any mold will probably be growing in places where flood water remained the longest, such as in the basement.

Condensation: If you see a lot of condensation in your home, it is a sign that you have a high level of moisture. This condition often leads to a mold problem.

THREE TYPES OF MOLD TESTS

THERE ARE THREE COMMON TYPES OF TESTS TO CHECK FOR MOLD.

1. Air testing

Air sampling tests the concentration of mold spores in the air. Samples are taken from the air and are later examined under a microscope.

Air tests can tell you if you have a mold problem, even if you cannot find the mold growth. However, the number of mold spores in the air can change drastically in a small amount of time, meaning the results can vary.

2. Surface testing

Surface testing takes samples from household surfaces to find the amount of mold growth and spores deposited around the home. Samples are collected by tape lifting, swabbing, or other methods, and are then examined in a laboratory.

Unlike air tests, surface tests cannot identify the exact concentration of mold spores in the air.

3. Bulk testing

Bulk testing involves collecting pieces of material (such as drywall, insulation, fiber, etc.) from the home and taking them to a laboratory, where mold particles on the material can be examined under a microscope.

Ideally, you should use all three types of tests, since each has its own strengths and weaknesses.

MOLD R

Indoor mold growth can, and should, be prevented by controlling the moisture in your home. If you clean up the mold but do not fix the water problem, it is likely that the mold will come back. Here are a few tips to help you with the clean-up:

1. Protect yourself. In order to limit your exposure to airborne mold, you may want to cover your mouth and nose with an N-95 respirator to avoid breathing in spores. Wear elbow-length rubber or latex gloves and cover your eyes with goggles to protect them from mold and chemicals.

2. Clean hard surfaces.
Scrub mold off hard surfaces with detergent and water, and dry the area completely.

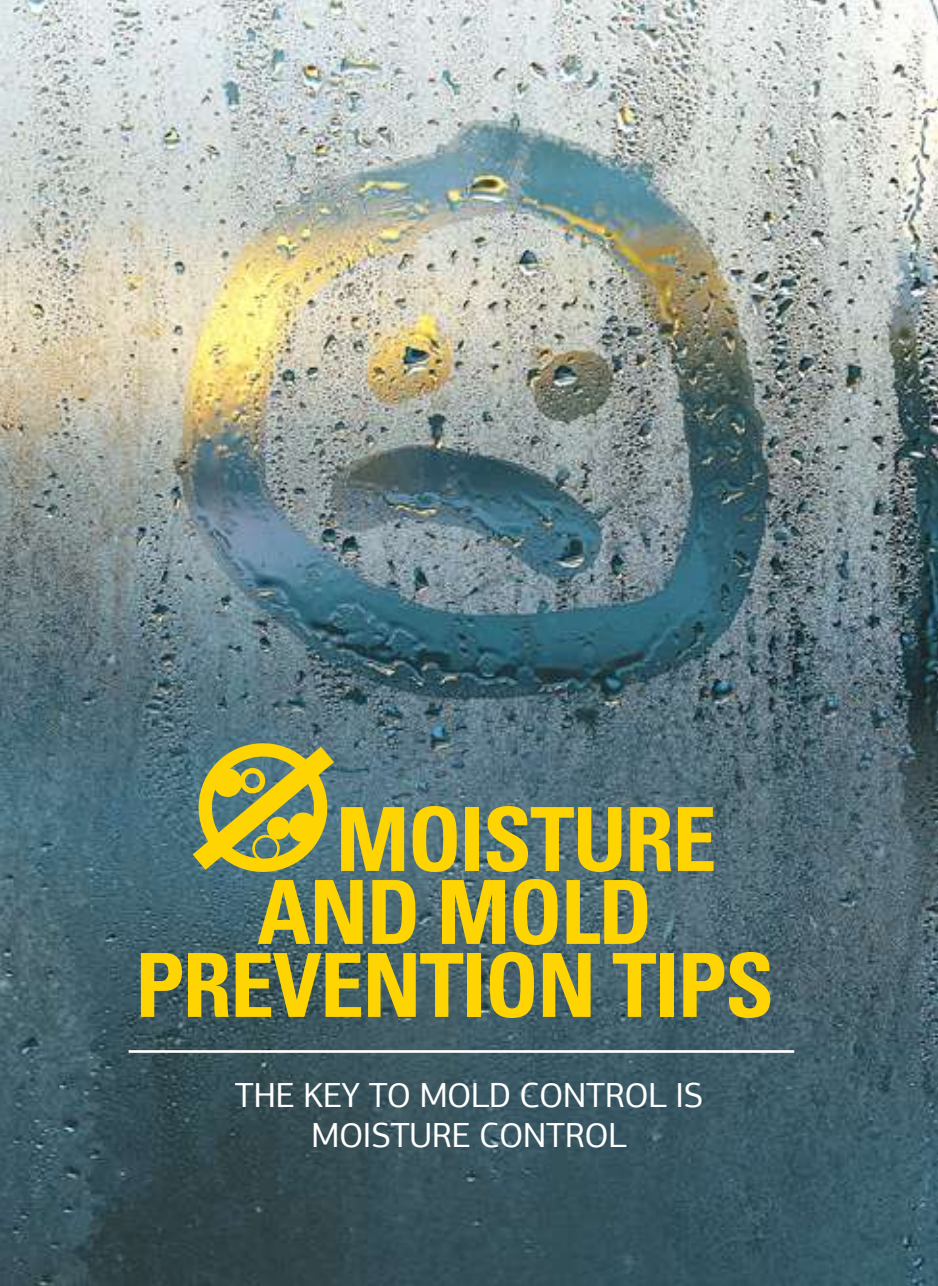
3. Fix all leaks. If you notice any leaking pipes or water seepage, correct it immediately. Call a professional plumber to repair leaking or sweating pipes.

REMOVAL

4. Seal small openings. After mold is completely removed, use caulk to seal cracks around your windows, doors, and at critical junctures where the walls meet the floor and the ceiling. Apply caulk or weather stripping to your windows, especially between the frames and panes. Dry the affected area completely.

5. Have your air ducts cleaned. This is especially crucial if you notice mold growth in more than one room or if your mold problem keeps recurring despite your best efforts.

6. Dispose of surfaces that absorb moisture. If you notice mold on carpeting, ceiling tiles, and other porous surfaces, remove and discard them. The mold makes them unfit for recycling.



MOISTURE AND MOLD PREVENTION TIPS

THE KEY TO MOLD CONTROL IS MOISTURE CONTROL

1. Reduce humidity levels. Ideally, keep the humidity levels between 30 and 50 percent. Open the windows on days when it is not humid and run a dehumidifier in the rooms most prone to moisture.

2. Install a sump pump. This is a great investment if you live in a flood-prone area. Water that seeps into the basement collects in a sump basin and is pumped outside.

3. When water leaks or spills occur indoors, act quickly. If wet or damp areas are dried within 24 to 48 hours, in most cases mold will not grow.

4. Run exhaust fans. When you cook, turn on the exhaust fan to catch water vapor. Use the fan in the bathroom as you shower to reduce condensation caused by steam.

5. Make sure the ground slopes away from the building's foundation, so that water does not enter or collect around the foundation. Add extensions to direct rainwater, at least five feet (1.5 m) away from the foundation.

6. Clean and repair roof gutters regularly.

7. If you see condensation or moisture collecting on windows, walls, or pipes, dry the wet surface and try to eliminate or reduce the source of moisture/water.

8. Inspect your home regularly. Check all potential problem areas for mold (re)growth. Monitor all sealed leaks and cracks after heavy rains or floods.

FURTHER READING AND REFERENCES

The testing guide is largely based on the following websites, which we also recommend for any further reading.

https://*www.cdc.gov/mold/dampness_facts.htm*
https://*www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-10/documents/moldguide12.pdf*
https://*www.epa.gov/mold/text-version-mold-house-tour*
https://*www.medicinenet.com/mold_exposure/article.htm#what_are_the_health_risks_of_mold_exposure_what_are_symptoms_and_signs_of_mold_allergy*
https://*www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/323419.php*

Visit ***www.health-metric.com/mold*** for further information, FAQ, and video instructions. Alternatively, contact us at ***support@health-metric.com for help.***

Disclaimer: This guide is intended for educational purposes only and does not replace independent professional judgment.