

# AFTER THE FLOOD: MOLD

Mold can be both toxic and hazardous. Flooding and humidity are ideal breeding grounds for mold growth. Molds produce allergens, irritants, and potentially toxic substances.

The most effective way to eliminate mold growth is to first eliminate the moisture. Once the moisture problem is solved, the mold can be cleaned or removed. Clean materials that can be cleaned and discard materials that cannot be cleaned. For professional assistance, you can contact a mold inspection or removal service if needed.

### Potential Health Effects

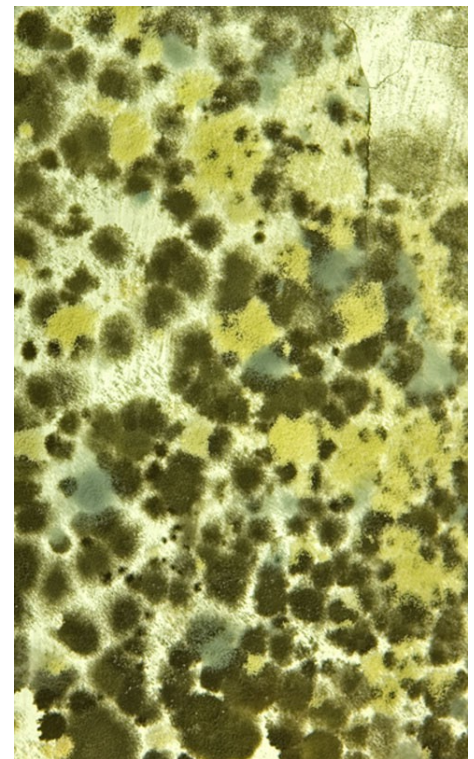
- Asthma attacks can be triggered or worsened.
- Irritant effects in the eyes, skin, nose, and throat.
- Lungs can feel a burning sensation.
- Hypersensitivity Pneumonitis—resembles bacterial pneumonia, may develop from mold exposure.
- Allergic reactions—mold or spores touched or inhaled may cause sneezing, runny nose, red eyes, and skin rash.
- People with weak immune systems may be vulnerable to lung infections.

### How to Protect Yourself

- Wear a mask to keep mold spores from being inhaled.
- Wear protective clothing and avoid breathing or touching mold.

### Cleaning Up Mold

- Fix water leaks.
- Clean up and dry out the building quickly.
- Use fans and dehumidifiers and open doors and windows to remove moisture.
- Remove all porous items that have been wet for more than 48 hours and that cannot be thoroughly cleaned and dried. These items can remain a source of mold growth and should be removed from the home or building. Removal of porous, non-cleanable items is a must. These items include:
  - ◇ Carpeting
  - ◇ Carpet pad
  - ◇ Wallpaper
  - ◇ Drywall
  - ◇ Ceiling tiles
  - ◇ Insulation material
  - ◇ Some clothing
  - ◇ Leather
  - ◇ Paper
  - ◇ Wood products
  - ◇ Food
- Mix 1 cup bleach to 1 gallon water. Use this mixture to wash items, scrub rough surfaces with a stiff brush, rinse with clean water, and let dry.



**For more information, contact CCHD's Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program at 452-0881 x310 or visit [www.cchdmt.org](http://www.cchdmt.org) or [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).**