

Environmental Control for Dust Mold

1. Remove any visible mold or mildew & treat with mild retardant.
2. Use dehumidifier in any damp areas, particularly in a basement.
3. Remove old books.
4. Drain the pan of water under the refrigerator.
5. Avoid live/real Christmas trees & storing firewood inside the house (mold is present on the bark of wood).
6. Avoid houseplants.
7. Clean walls & add mold inhibitor to paint.
8. Have the central heating & air conditioning system checked for mold & cleaned regularly.
9. Drain water from, near or under house. Trim bushes away from the foundation.

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Common Mold Aeroallergens

Alternaria

- Common in the air from late spring to fall, especially from noon until 3pm daily.
 - Found outdoors on soil, plants, and decaying vegetation.
 - Grows on organic debris in the soil, leaves, stems, flowers & fruits of many vegetable, cereal grains & ornamental plants (such as tomato, bean, chrysanthemum & cabbage).
 - Common indoor source: house dust and damp areas.
 - Spores are large and easily inhaled, often linked with asthma.
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Hormodendrum (Cladosporium)

- The highest levels occur from summer through December & the daily peak of spore counts is between 11am & 3pm.
 - One of the most common outdoor molds that can sometimes make up half of the total spore count; also grows indoors on wood, textiles, and food.
 - Often dark green to black colonies.
 - Associated with hay fever and asthma symptoms.
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Aspergillus

- Found in soil, compost, and decaying plant matter.
 - Indoors: thrives in damp walls, air conditioning systems, and dust.
 - Some species produce toxins (mycotoxins); can cause allergic bronchopulmonary aspergillosis in susceptible individuals.
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Mucor

- Rapidly growing mold found in soil, plant material, and decaying fruits/vegetables.
 - Less common allergen but still present in household dust.
 - Can cause severe infections (mucormycosis) in immunocompromised individuals.
 - It has a fluffy or cottony texture & is initially white or yellow in color, later becoming grey.
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Penicillium

- Common indoors in water-damaged buildings and on food.
 - Blue-green colonies often seen on bread and fruit.
 - Major trigger for allergies and asthma.
 - The spores are plentiful inside the house during the winter & show up at the highest levels around 2pm.
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Epicoccum

- Found on decaying plants, paper, wood, drywall, fabric, carpet, mattresses & painted surfaces.
 - Produces suede-like or downy patches, ranging in color from yellow to orange-brown.
 - Known to be strongly allergenic and associated with seasonal allergies.
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Bipolaris

- Common outdoors on grasses, soil, and plant debris.
 - Indoors: thrives in damp areas.
 - In the home it may grow on houseplants, decaying food like celery or corn, or on water damaged materials such as sheetrock, carpeting or hardwood flooring.
 - A rapid growing mold, it appears soft or fluffy with color ranging from whitish to greyish brown as it starts to grow, becoming dark olive or black as it matures, usually within 5 days.
 - Associated with allergic fungal sinusitis and asthma.
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