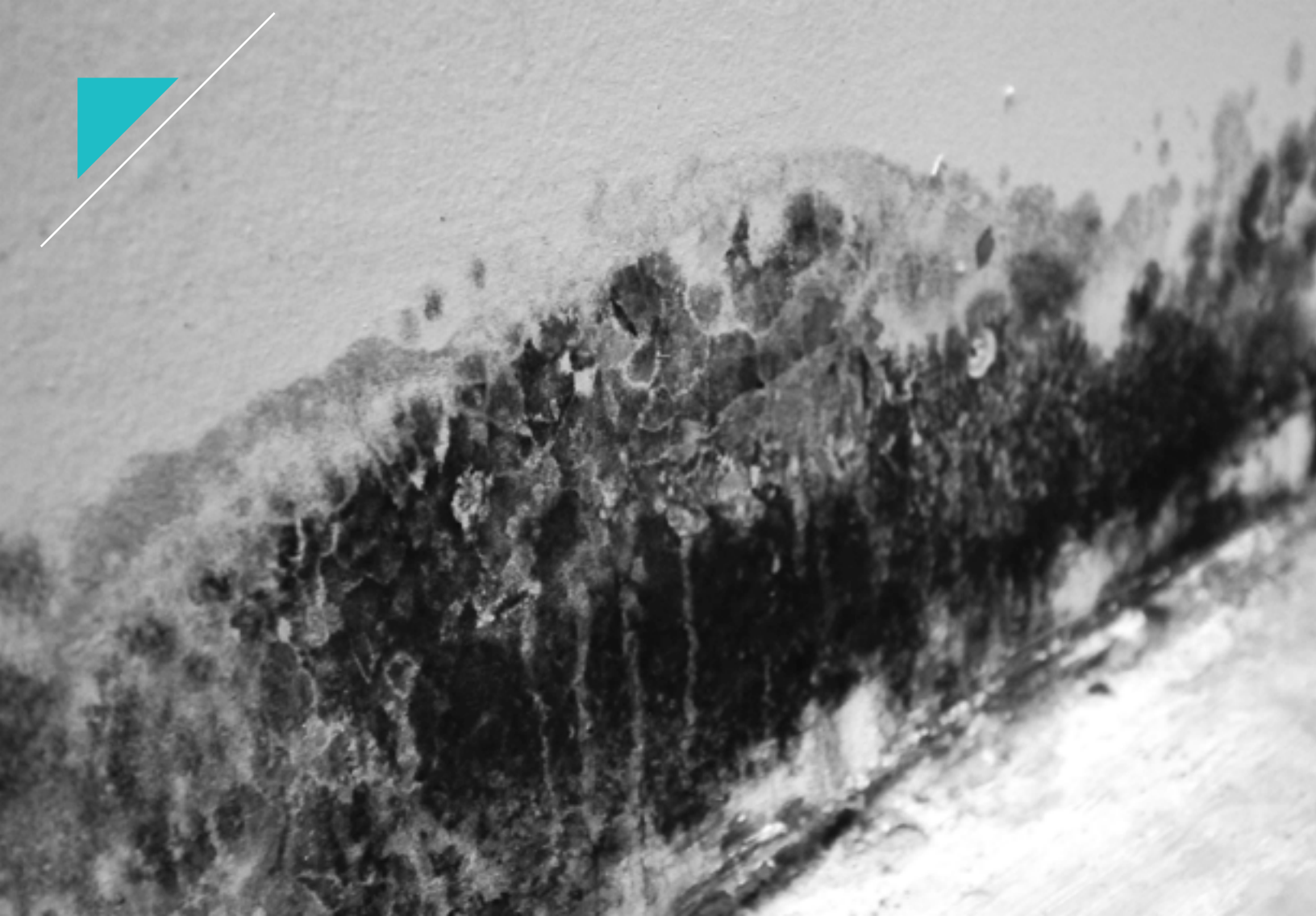




The Hidden Dangers of Mold

A guide to help you get back to normal,
sooner, after mold damage.

*Service*MASTER
Restore



Do you have mold?

Mold exists everywhere. It's in the air and on many surfaces.

Generally, small amounts of mold in the air outside are harmless. However, mold becomes a problem when it is growing inside your home. If you can see or smell mold, a health risk may be present. No matter what type of mold is present, you should remove it.

Keep reading to learn how to prevent mold from growing in your home, the health risks associated with mold, how to clean it up, and who should do the cleaning.

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The Health Risks of Mold

Mold produces allergens, irritants, and in some cases, potentially toxic substances called mycotoxins.

Mold exposure may aggravate allergy and asthma symptoms, especially in children and people who have weakened immune systems. Inhaling or touching mold or mold spores may cause allergic reactions in sensitive individuals. Allergic reactions to mold are common, and they can be immediate or delayed.

Symptoms of mold for both mold-allergic and non-allergic people:

- Hay fever-type symptoms
- Sneezing
- Runny nose
- Red eyes
- Skin rash (dermatitis)
- Throat and lung irritation
- Asthma attacks

Causes and Common Areas for Mold Growth

1. Mold grows in places with a lot of moisture, such as around leaks in roofs, windows, pipes, or where there has been flooding.

2. Mold grows well on paper products, cardboard, ceiling tiles, and wood products.

3. Mold can also grow in dust, paints, wallpaper, insulation, drywall, carpet, fabric, HVAC systems, and upholstery.



10 Mold Prevention Tips From The CDC ⁽¹⁾

- 1. Control humidity levels.** Keep humidity levels no higher than 50% all day long by using an air conditioner or dehumidifier.
- 2. Promptly fix** leaky roofs, windows, and pipes.
- 3. Thoroughly clean and dry after flooding.** Remove or replace carpets and upholstery that have been soaked and cannot be dried promptly.
- 4. Consider not using carpet** in rooms or areas that are prone to water leaks or flooding.
- 5. Ventilate bathrooms,** laundry rooms, and kitchens.
- 6. Make sure your clothes dryer vents** outside your home.
- 7. Run the bathroom fan** or open the window when showering.
- 8. Use exhaust fans** or open windows whenever cooking, running the dishwasher or washing dishes by hand.
- 9. Add mold inhibitors** to paints before painting.
- 10. Clean bathrooms** with mold-killing products.



DIY Mold Cleanup

When you can do it yourself:

If the moldy area is less than about 10 square feet, in most cases, you can handle the job yourself.

Mold growth can be removed from hard surfaces with commercial products, soap and water, or a bleach solution of no more than 1 cup of household laundry bleach in 1 gallon of water⁽¹⁾.



When to hire a professional:

- 1. If there has been significant water damage** (such as from flooding), and mold growth covers more than 10 square feet
- 2. If you suspect that the HVAC system may be contaminated with mold.** (Do not run the HVAC system if you know or suspect that it is contaminated with mold, since it could spread the problem throughout the house.)
- 3. If the damage was caused by sewage** or other contaminated water.
- 4. If you are unsure about how to clean an item,** or if the item is expensive or of sentimental value.

Source: (1) http://www.cdc.gov/mold/dampness_facts.htm



Bring in the Experts

Carpet and rug cleaning, water damage, and fire or water restoration specialists, like ServiceMaster Restore of Laurel, Hattiesburg & Meridian, are skilled experts in restoring mold damage.

It is important to remember that a mold problem is not completely solved until the source of moisture is repaired in addition to the actual, physical removal of the mold.



Take action at the first sign of mold.

If the mold growth already seems large, call the experts at **ServiceMaster Restore**. We know the health of your family and the safety of your home are important, and when mold compromises that, we will work hard to get things back to normal.



ServiceMASTER
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