

## INFORMATION ON MOLDS

Molds are part of the natural environment. Molds may begin growing indoors when mold spores land on wet or damp surfaces.

Molds produce allergens, but like any other allergen, exposed individuals will respond differently. Some may have no reaction, while others may experience hay-fever type symptoms or more severe symptoms. If you are having symptoms you believe may be the result of mold allergens, make an appointment with Student Health for an examination.

It is impossible to get rid of all mold and mold spores indoors (from EPA – [A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture and Your Home](http://www.epa.gov/mold/moldbasics.html) <http://www.epa.gov/mold/moldbasics.html> )

Generally, it is not necessary to identify the species of mold growing in an area, and CDC does not recommend routine sampling for molds.

WFU has a Mold Management Plan for identifying and treating areas of potential mold growth (<http://facilities.wfu.edu/downloads/ehs-mold-plan.pdf> ).

WFU Facilities and Campus Services will treat any area of mold less than 10 square feet. If greater than 10 square feet, WFU will hire an outside contractor to remediate the area. This is based on recommendations from the CDC and EPA.

Moisture sources may include leaking pipes, standing water, damp clothing or towels, or condensation in the air.

To help prevent mold growth:

- Do not open windows while heating or cooling units are operating. This will cause condensation and may contribute to mold growth.
- Do not leave wet or damp clothes, towels or shoes in closets. Set them out on a drying rack until completely dry.
- Do not place potted plants or any other source of moisture on or around heating and cooling units.
- If you see mold, immediately call Residence Life and Housing or Facilities and Campus Services to have the area treated.

**When do we check for mold?**

Each room is inspected at least twice a year by RLH and F&CS. We rely on students to alert RLH or FCS if they see mold in a room.

**Does WFU conduct testing for mold?**

Generally, it is not necessary to identify the species of mold growing in an area, and CDC does not recommend routine sampling for molds.

**Is my child's health in danger?**

Molds produce allergens, but like any other allergen, exposed individuals will respond differently. Some may have no reaction, while others may experience hay-fever type symptoms or more severe symptoms. If your child is having symptoms you believe may be the result of mold allergens, have them make an appointment with Student Health for an examination.

**What are the symptoms?**

Allergic responses include hay fever-type symptoms, such as sneezing, runny nose, red eyes, and skin rash (dermatitis). Allergic reactions to mold are common. They can be immediate or delayed. Molds can also cause asthma attacks in people with asthma who are allergic to mold. In addition, mold exposure can irritate the eyes, skin, nose, throat, and lungs of both mold-allergic and non-allergic people.

**How is mold treated?**

WFU has a Mold Management Plan for identifying and treating areas of potential mold growth (<http://facilities.wfu.edu/downloads/ehs-mold-plan.pdf>).

**Method 1:** Damp-wipe surfaces with water and WFU approved cleaning chemical products (except wood —use wood floor cleaner); scrub as needed.

**Method 2:** Wet vacuum (in the case of porous materials, some mold spores/fragments will remain in the material but will not grow if the material is completely dried). Steam cleaning may be an alternative for carpets and some upholstered furniture.

**Method 3:** High-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) vacuum after the material has been thoroughly dried. Dispose of the contents of the HEPA vacuum in well-sealed plastic bags.

**Method 4:** Discard / remove water-damaged materials and seal in plastic bags while inside of containment, if present. Dispose of as normal waste. HEPA vacuum area after it is dried.

**How is mold growth prevented?**

FCS will always look for sources of potential moisture that may contribute to mold growth when treating a room, and during routine inspections. These sources may include: leaking pipes, standing water, damp clothing or towels, or condensation in the air.

**What can my child do to help prevent mold growth?**

- Do not open windows while heating or cooling units are operating. This will cause condensation and may contribute to mold growth.
- Do not leave wet or damp clothes, towels or shoes in closets. Set them out on a drying rack until completely dry.
- Do not place potted plants or any other source of moisture on or around heating and cooling units.
- If your child sees a leak, immediately call Residence Life and Housing or Facilities and Campus Services for repair.
- If your child sees mold, immediately call Residence Life and Housing or Facilities and Campus Services to have the area treated.

**Who can I contact if I have more questions?**

The Office of Environmental Health and Safety. Steve Fisenne at 336-758-3089 or Michelle Lennon at 336-758-5385.

There are hundreds of types of molds, but not all of them are responsible for causing allergy symptoms. The most common allergy-causing molds include *Alternaria*, *Aspergillus*, *Cladosporium* and *Penicillium*.