

# Mould and your health

After heavy rain or flooding you may find mould in your home.

Mould is a type of fungi that can be found almost everywhere.

There are many different types of mould that can make you sick.

You might be able to see mould, but you may also have mould if:

- Your home has been flooded
- There is water damage
- There are strong, musty smells.

To prevent mould growing after flooding, clean up and dry out the house as fast as possible (within 48 hours).

## What does mould look like?

It is not easy to know what mould looks like. It can look like a stain, smudge or small spots. The most common moulds are black, green or white. However, mould can be many other colours from grey to orange to brown.

## How does mould affect you?

Mould can cause you to have a blocked nose, cough, wheeze, respiratory infection, itchy eyes and skin.

For people with asthma, breathing in mould spores may cause an asthma attack. Most people will not be affected by mould.

If you or your family get sick after contact with mould, speak to your doctor. **In the case of an emergency, phone 000.**

## What can I do if I have mould in my home?

If you decide to remove mould yourself, make sure there is good ventilation - open windows where possible - and wear protective clothing such as a shower cap, rubber gloves, eye protection, suitable shoes and a P1 or P2 face mask (available from your hardware store).

- To clean mouldy surfaces, use mild detergent or vinegar mixed with water (4-parts vinegar to 1-part water).
- Mould that is hard to remove, use bleach mixed with water (250mls of bleach in 4 litres of water). Open your windows if possible.
- Carpet may need to be professionally cleaned or replaced

When cleaning mould the following people should not be nearby:

- children under 12 years
- pregnant women
- people over 65 years
- those with weakened immune systems, allergies, severe asthma or lung diseases.

## Want to know more?

In NSW call 1300 066 055 to talk to your local Public Health Unit or visit [www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/factsheets/Pages/mould.aspx](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/factsheets/Pages/mould.aspx)