



Mold Avoidance Safety

Mold avoidance is based on the general principle of removing oneself from exposures to certain kinds of toxic mold and related harmful substances. Based on the reports of many individuals, it seems that some people cannot tolerate even tiny amounts of these substances without negative effects and therefore may benefit from scrupulous avoidance.

On the surface, it seems that avoiding toxic substances should be a relatively safe approach to addressing any illness. Anecdotal reports suggest that for the most part this may be the case for mold avoidance, with numerous people who have a hard time tolerating many other treatments reporting benefits from this.

However, one danger reported as being associated with mold avoidance occurs when someone who has successfully gotten clear of problematic toxins for an extended period of time is re-exposed to those toxins. When that occurs, the acute effect of the toxins can feel worse than when that same person was being chronically exposed without a break.

A typical symptom of people who have gotten relatively clear of these toxins and then been re-exposed is strong suicidal inclination. Thus, prior to going on a mold avoidance sabbatical, it is essential that people starting mold avoidance consider in advance what they will do if they start to experience substantial mood shifts or suicidal thoughts upon return to the home environment. A firm plan to move to a different, safer environment if these types of issues emerge is extremely strongly urged before anyone pursues any mold avoidance activities.

Numerous other reactions to problematic substances have been reported from people pursuing mold avoidance. These have occasionally included

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passing out, paralysis, inability to speak, seizures or convulsions – symptoms severe enough that hospitalization might be considered appropriate.

However, since few doctors have much knowledge even about mold illness, much less about mold avoidance, unfortunately some emergency rooms may not end up treating individuals suffering from this kind of reaction in appropriate ways. In addition, certain hospitals have substantial toxic mold problems themselves. Therefore, especially for people who are very reactive, upfront consideration related to preparing for this kind of circumstance may be a good idea.

The hyperreactivity experienced by people pursuing mold avoidance can alter their lives considerably. Mold avoiders often have to move to a different location for an extended period or perhaps forever. Some find it very difficult to find tolerable housing. They commonly find certain buildings impossible to enter without experiencing negative effects. When buying new possessions, they may have to be cautious to ensure that items aren't contaminated. The experience of many mold avoiders is that these difficulties lessen over time, but in general, they often find it difficult to live what most people would consider to be a normal life, at least for a time.

Another negative health effect that has occasionally been reported is when individuals misinterpret the concept that "mold is bad" to mean that they should try to clean up the mold in their own living environments. In some cases, this has resulted in severe, long-term health declines. Death is a possible outcome of this type of mistake.

No one with chronic neuroimmune illness should be doing any sort of mold remediation themselves. While small amounts of these toxins appear to be problematic for many people with this sort of illness, acute exposures to large amounts of the toxins (such as may occur when non-professional remediation is attempted) likely will cause an even greater amount of

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damage.

Even if the sick person is not present in the home during the process, non-professional remediation has the potential of making a home with a mold problem even more dangerous for people with chronic neuroimmune illness, since it may allow the spores to spread all over the building rather than remaining relatively contained.

Insofar as any remediation is done, it needs to be conducted in the [manner used by competent professionals](#) (for instance, using barriers to seal off the affected areas and removing moldy materials in accordance with hazardous materials protocols).

Another mistake that has the potential of causing harm is when people try to “kill” hidden mold in their home (for instance, through the use of ozone, dehumidifiers or herbal products such as “Thieves’ Oil”) rather than removing it safely. The problem is that such measures do nothing about the toxins that are the real problem. “Killing” the mold instead has the expected effect of prompting the colonies to release a great deal of dormant toxic spores into the environment all at once, thus increasing the amount of exposure experienced by inhabitants of the building.

Again, especially for people who already are suffering from chronic illness known to be mold-related, any remediation needs to be handled with extreme care using professional techniques -- not with a substance or device available at a local retail store or over the Internet.

The worst of all possible scenarios would be for an ill person to go on a mold avoidance sabbatical to get clear of mold, then return to the problematic home and try to remediate the mold without professional help. Please don't do this!

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In addition, mold avoidance is not a substitute for professional medical treatment. Those who believe that toxic mold may be an issue for them should consult with their healthcare practitioner(s) about their health issues and consider pursuing other treatments that are made available to them, in addition to or as an alternative to pursuing mold avoidance.

Most importantly, please recognize that mold can be very dangerous. Mistakes can be extremely costly or deadly. Therefore, please do not underestimate it and please be safe in dealing with it.

Best regards,

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Updated: January 16, 2015