

Chapter 2

How Mold Can Affect Your Health

Risks to People

The adverse health effects reported from mold exposure are wide-ranging in type and severity. Children, the elderly, and anyone with allergies or a compromised immune system are the most prone to illness from mold exposure. To put the allergy factor in perspective, one out of five people are said to suffer from allergies or asthma. The Asthma & Allergy Foundation ranks these conditions as the sixth leading cause of chronic disease in the U.S.

The most common effects of mold exposure are respiratory ailments including exacerbated asthma, shortness of breath, wheezing, and lung irritation. The presence of mold can also cause:

- Sinus problems, such as sneezing and runny nose
- Burning or itchy eyes
- Nervous system problems, such as headaches and tremors
- Depression and memory loss
- Fatigue, lack of energy
- Dizziness
- Nausea, digestive problems
- Low-grade fever
- Skin rashes, itching, welts, or hives
- Changes or suppression of immune system (increased susceptibility to disease)