

# Mold

Mold is all around us. Outside it serves the useful purpose of breaking down dead organic matter. Without mold we would quickly be overrun with leaves, bark, and other debris. Thus, outside mold is our friend, however; inside mold is not a welcome sight. Mold spores are everywhere, thus we need to be on the lookout whenever we have had any kind of water leakage. Kitchens and bathrooms are common problem areas because we always have water running there. Mold is happy to start a colony anywhere it can find enough moisture to survive. Molds can cause health problems. They produce allergens, irritants, and sometimes toxic substances. Allergic responses may be something as simple as a runny nose; they can also cause life threatening asthma attacks. Allergic responses to mold can be immediate or delayed. Some people report that mold makes them tired or depressed. Some of the toxins produced by molds can cause diseases and even death in humans and animals. Molds can also cause damage to property and goods. It is easy to see that we should all be aware of mold and do our best to prevent it and act promptly when its presence is known.

People will commonly use bleach to clean an area affected by mold. According to the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) bleach is not effective on fungus. It cleans only the surface of an area, leaving spores beneath the surface that can start to grow in as little as 24 hours. Dr. Edward R. Close, PhD, founder of EJC Enterprises, a company that specializes in helping companies deal with mold infestations in buildings said, “Over the last ten years, because of my training and experience as an environmental consultant, I’ve had the unique opportunity to gather some very interesting data on black toxic mold. The analysis of the data collected has led me to conclude that certain therapeutic- grade essential oils and blends are more effective, and far less dangerous than conventional toxic mold remedies.”

An essential oil diffuser disperses essential oils in a micro vapor into the air. They stay suspended in the air for several hours. This allows them to reduce bacteria, viruses, and molds or funguses before they have a chance to take hold in our homes or bodies. Additionally, they cleanse the air of odors and freshen it with a natural, nontoxic fragrance. Diffusing essential oils also releases oxygenating molecules and negative ions which kill microbes and enhance our immune systems. They also remove metallic particles and toxins from the air and some essential oils will also reduce radiation. Testing done at Weber State University in Utah proved conclusively that diffusing essential oils kills life-threatening airborne microorganisms! (Note: If you have a baby diffuse in a different room than the child is in and don’t take the baby into the room where you diffused for 30 minutes after diffusing. Also be aware of your pets—don’t diffuse with birds, reptiles, or fish around, it kills the bacteria they need to survive. Diffuse gentler scents if you have a cat or dog as their noses are tender and make sure they have an exit available if they don’t want to be in the room where you are diffusing.)

All pure essential oils are inherently antibacterial, antiviral, antifungal, or some combination of the three. Here’s a quick list of some essential oils that are specifically antifungal (mold killers):

- Cinnamon (treat like Oregano)
- Dill
- Geranium
- Juniper Berry
- Lemongrass
- Orange

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- Oregano (never diffuse oregano, always use it diluted and with care, if precautions aren't necessary you don't have a pure, uncut oregano essential oil, you have something else)
- Tea Tree
- Thyme
- There are three essential oil blends from Be Young that were designed to combat mold (also viruses and bacteria), they are Spice for Life, Guardian, and Defence.

You can diffuse these essential oils to help prevent mold. You can also use them when cleaning to help prevent mold. Here are some ideas of how to incorporate essential oils into your regular cleaning routine:

- Take a one quart squirt bottle, fill it with water, add 20 drops of an essential oil of your choice, shake well, and use as you would any other all purpose cleaner. Remember to avoid eyes, keep out of reach of children, and to label. Also, shake well and often! The essential oil will float to the top of the water, if you don't pause and shake it every now and then you will be cleaning with plain water.
- Add a drop of essential oil to the soap tray when running the dishwasher. This will help prevent mold growth in your dishwasher and keep it smelling fresh.
- Add a couple of drops of essential oil to your laundry soap (I just put it in the liquid tray, if you use powder add to the powder in your scoop and then pour in on your clothes). This will help disinfect your clothing, make them smell fresh without added toxic synthetic scents, and help prevent mold in your washing machine. This works especially well if you've ever forgotten you started a load and let it sit in your washing machine overnight. Just add a few drops of essential oils and run the load again, you'll never know you forgot it.
- Add a few drops to the soap or water section of your steam cleaner to get a serious deep down clean.
- Add 5-10 drops of essential oil to your mop water before doing the floors.
- To freshen carpets add 5-10 drops of essential oil to one cup of baking soda or cornstarch. Sprinkle on the carpet, wait 5-10 minutes then vacuum up.

If you have mold present, up the ante by increasing the amount of essential oil used. You don't need to use an essential oil straight (undiluted), but you will want to increase the amount of essential oil used. You may also choose to use white vinegar as your liquid instead of water. Vinegar by itself can kill up to 82% of mold. Here are some recipes for using essential oils in your fight against mold. Note: these are STRONG recipes, you do not need to use this much essential oil in ordinary cleaning, be absolutely sure you keep these recipes out of reach of children and pets, make sure they are clearly labeled. They will eat their way out of a plastic bottle in a week or so (sometimes less). Make sure you drink plenty of water when using them to help flush the toxins out of your system that will be released.

When cleaning up mold avoid breathing the spores, wear a mask, preferably an N-95 respirator (available at your local hardware store). I would recommend putting a drop or two of Lemongrass inside the mask to increase your protection. Be aware that you will be sending mold spores into the air as you remove the mold or moldy articles, others in the room or house will also need breathing protection (in another room a diffuser would probably do the trick). You'll want to wear gloves while cleaning the area, preferably those long ones that go up to your elbows that you can pick up in the dishwashing section of the grocery store. Finally, wear goggles (the ones without ventilation holes) to protect your eyes from mold spores. So, use one of the recipes below to kill the mold, wait an hour or so for it to be good and dead, then come in with your cleaning equipment (sponge or cloth, bucket of soapy water or vinegar water with some more essential oil in it), clean up the area, bag all items used. Wait another hour or so, spray with essential oils again. Then watch the area carefully over the next couple of days to make sure you got all the mold. Be sure you fix wherever the water came from so you don't have this problem again.

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### Basic Mold Recipe

10-20 drops Tea Tree essential oil

2 cups water or vinegar

Combine in bottle, shake often, and spray the problem area. Do not rinse.

### Black Mold

8 drops Tea Tree

5 drops Rosemary

4 drops Lemongrass

2 ½ cups water or vinegar

Combine in a bottle, shake often, mist where the black mold is. Do not rinse.

### Mold or Mildew

1/2 Cup Baking Soda

10 drops Tea Tree essential oil

10 drops Lavender essential oil

10 drops Geranium essential oil

Combine all ingredients and using a damp sponge or cloth, scrub bathtub and/or shower. For serious mildew buildup areas, combine 20 drops of Tea Tree and water in a spray bottle, and spray area every day for 5 days, then twice a week

### Mold spray (small areas)

3-5 drops Oregano or Guardian blend

6 oz water or vinegar

Combine in bottle, shake often, and spray where the mold is. Do not rinse.

Don't forget your diffuser:

- Diffuse equal parts Geranium and Tea Tree, let this be your first line of defense against mold problems.
- Diffuse Spice for Life blend for 15 minutes every three hours and you'll kill the mold (you still need to clean up the dead mold. You can diffuse continually for up to eight hours if you're going to be away from home (and you don't leave pets in the room).
- Yes, Guardian is the number one essential oil blend for mold and fungus, but it is too strong to diffuse for large amounts of time. An occasional diffusing of 10-15 minutes is fine, but not for the concentrated times we're looking at here.

If you are cleaning up a mold infestation of an area greater than about ten square feet it is recommended that you contact a professional. You may want to read the brochure provided by the EPA, located on the web at <http://www.epa.gov/mold/moldbasics.html> for more information.

**To order, for class information, or if you have questions contact:**

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