QUICK TIPS: Mold Prevention

Molds and mold spores are part of the natural environment and can be found anywhere, indoors and outdoors. They can grow on surfaces of objects and in deteriorated materials, as long as favorable conditions are present. Mold requires three things to grow: moisture, an organic food source (paper, fabric, sheetrock), and the proper temperature. As no species of mold can grow without moisture, the key to mold control is moisture control. In most cases of mold growth in an indoor area, air sampling and mold testing are unnecessary. The most common causes of mold growth are floods, water leaks, high humidity, and poor ventilation. Addressing these issues and removing moisture sources within 24-48 hours can assist in preventing mold growth.

Signs of Mold

- Condensation or moisture collection
- Musty smell
- Water damage
- Discolored spots, fuzz, or spores
- Warped wallpaper or bubbling paint

Common Areas with Mold

- Bathrooms: Under sinks, on shower curtains, behind the toilet, and in the surrounding area
- Appliances: Air conditioners and laundry machines
- Areas that can pool water
- Near windows
- Porous/soft surfaces such as carpets, rugs, and furniture

Prevention

- Fix plumbing leaks or any sources of water leaks immediately
- Allow all items to dry completely
- Do not paint or caulk over mold
- Keep humidity below 60%
- Increase cleaning frequency
- Keep HVAC drip pans clear and unobstructed
- Use fans and dehumidifiers to remove moisture

Clean up

- Small isolated area (less than 10 SF mold):
  - Remediation can be conducted by trained building maintenance staff
  - Don appropriate PPE: Gloves, Safety Glasses. N95 is recommended, but not always necessary
  - Clean the area with a detergent solution such as 10% bleach
  - Allow area to fully dry. Level of dryness can be confirmed using a moisture meter
  - Any porous material that has started growing mold should be discarded
- Large area:
  - Please reach out to EHS at ehs@nyu.edu for assistance or questions