



## Allergy, Asthma & Sinus Center

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### MOLD ALLERGY

#### Indoor molds

***Aspergillus and Penicillium*** are found on floors, carpets, bedding, mattresses, pillows, (especially foam rubber), basements, attics, barns, foods, garbage pails, under refrigerators, in humidifiers, dehumidifiers and air conditioners, in wallpaper, paint, plastics, flowers, upholstery, wool, cotton, leather, books, magazines, and fruits as well as the bathroom.

***Aspergillus*** is also known as common indoor mildew. Peaks during harvesting season & in hot humid weather or during rainy periods. Proliferates easily on plants, dry goods, paper cotton & leather.

***Penicillium*** is usually concentrated in basements or any damp area where it can colonize on foods, clothing, leather and paper. Higher levels found indoors.

#### Outdoor molds

***Alternaria and Cladosporium***, grow on garbage, decaying vegetation, rotting wood, compost piles, hay bales, and in shaded areas as well as in the soil and on leaves of growing grass. *Alternaria* grows on organic debris on the fruits of many vegetables, cereal grains and ornamental plants. These molds can also be found indoors in damp areas, such as basements. Levels peak in hot, humid weather or during rainy periods.

***Curvularia*** is a common outdoor fungus of grasses, wooded areas, rotting vegetation, mulches, wood & leaf piles, soil and cereal grains; the spores are dispersed by lawn mowing. It can also be found indoors in damp areas, such as basements or crawl spaces.

***Fusarium*** is very common outdoors and may occur indoors. It is prevalent on indoor plants, gardens and crop fields, especially concentrated near strawberry and tomato crops. Outdoor levels peak summer and fall.

***Epicoccum*** is widespread in temperate regions: it colonizes in decaying vegetable matter, plant leaves and textiles.

***Pullularia*** is prevalent in damp, tiled bathroom floors, sinks, standing water, sewage, drain pipes, damp laundry rooms and basements. It is also a common soil organism.



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**Mold allergy is associated with year round nasal congestion and is found when people experience symptoms even though the pollen count is low.**

**Allergy to Penicillium mold does not mean you are allergic to the drug Penicillin.**

Potted plants **raise mold spore counts very little.**

***Eliminating dampness and darkness are ways to reduce mold indoors.***

- Keeping basements dry, ventilated and well-lit helps. Dryers should be vented outside. Throw away damp piles of paper, old carpeting, furniture, etc.
- Replace carpeting, wallboard and other construction materials that have suffered water damage. Avoiding compost heaps, hay cutting, harvesting, grass cutting, raking leaves, grain storage and damp garages, sheds or greenhouses is essential.
- Take a look at your air conditioner, refrigerator and humidifier since these are also likely homes for molds to grow.