



IS MOLD MAKING YOU SICK?

With Americans living in an ever-increasing toxic world, autoimmune disease, chronic illness, and unexplained illnesses are at epidemic levels. Environmental and biotoxin illness* is becoming more prevalent as nearly 25% of the population have the HLA-DR gene which leaves them unable to produce the antibodies needed to remove mycotoxins from water-damage mold.

**Biotoxin illness — sometimes referred to as mold illness — is not an allergy. While it shares some symptoms with an allergic reaction, a biotoxin illness is an inflammatory reaction triggered by the immune system. It is also known as Chronic Inflammatory Response Syndrome or CIRS.*

So how do you know if its mold making you sick? It's tricky because symptoms present in many areas of the body and quite often multiple organ systems are involved.

- Head: Chronic sinus infections, dizziness, migraines/headaches, brain fog, ADD, anxiety, depression, panic attacks, mood swings, hearing or vision changes, even neuro-degenerative diseases like MS, ALS, Parkinson's, and Alzheimer's.
- Gut: SIBO, IBS, Crohn's/colitis.
- Hormonal: Adrenal, thyroid/Hashimoto's, infertility, heavy periods, PMS, PCOS, endometriosis.
- Skin: Psoriasis, eczema, hives, rashes.

Other common symptoms: arrhythmias, shortness of breath, chronic fatigue, Fibromyalgia, insomnia, night sweats, sensitivity to light, touch, noise, multiple chemical sensitivity, joint pain, rheumatoid arthritis, and exercise intolerance.

Mold exposure can also trigger Lyme and the co-infections, and viral infections like EBV, Herpes, and other viruses that were previously dormant in the body (sometimes as far back as early childhood) but became activated after your body hit toxin overload.

Children exposed to mold can experience chronic ear infections, flu-like symptoms, asthma, allergies, learning issues, ADD/ADHD, bedwetting, and irritability.

When you go to the doctor with any of these symptoms, most conventional medicine doctors treat only the symptoms, unaware of the complex illnesses of biotoxin exposure. Often, when patients don't respond to medications, they are told, *"It's just stress"* or *"it's all in your head."*

What Can You Do?

Find a medical professional who specializes in environmentally acquired illness (EAI).

www.iseai.org

Take a Visual Contrast Sensitivity (VCS) test: This is a visual test for neurologic function. Mycotoxins can break the blood-brain barrier and have neurological effects. This simple test can be an early indicator of a potential mold illness.

www.survivingmold.com

If You Know Mold is Making You Sick

It's very important to remove yourself from the source ASAP. Options, depending on your level of symptoms, include:

- Moving, camping in your backyard (yes, people do this!), living in an RV, finding a *clean* temporary apartment or hotel. Remember, you can't take anything with you that is contaminated! There is a cleaning protocol for certain items but nothing porous, like paper, wood, etc.

If you can't leave, do as many things on this list as possible:

- Get a dehumidifier if you live in a high humidity climate. Humidity above 50% in the home can create mold growth after just two days.
- Consider getting rid of objects trapping high amounts of mold spores, like carpet, curtains, especially in your bedroom.
- Get a high-quality air purifier. My favs are from www.intellipure.com and www.airdoctor.com. Quality matters here!
- Wash your bedding and clothes with products from sources listed at the end of this article. (Make sure your washing machine is not a source of mold. Front-loaders are especially susceptible)
- Try a sinus rinse 1-2x a day from Micro Balance (link in resources).
- Ask someone knowledgeable with your situation if fogging would be helpful.
- Live as clean as you can to avoid adding to your toxic burden. Switch to clean household/personal care products, eat organic, plant-based, non-GMO as much as possible, drink filtered water.
- Avoid EMFs as much as possible as research shows harmful effects, especially for those living with/in mold. Get an ethernet for your laptop, turn off Wi-Fi/Bluetooth and turn airplane mode on when not using, no electronics in your bedroom. Avoid anything 'smart' in your home - it's likely a source of EMFs.

YOU FOUND MOLD..... NOW WHAT?!?!?

Finding mold in your home can be scary and overwhelming. Whether you made this discovery after being diagnosed with a mold illness or the discovery made you realize this may be the reason for your health issues, take some comfort in knowing you are getting answers! I've been there and I'm hoping by sharing this information it will save you time and frustration, not to mention money! And the process of proper remediation is expensive and super confusing. Here are some suggestions based on my experiences:

Hire a Professional Mold Inspector:

A quality, thorough mold inspection should include different methods of sampling, inspecting the home visually, doing a humidity and thermal imaging check, and the inspector should ask about your health issues. The International Society of Environmentally Acquired Illness is a good source for finding an indoor environmental professional. www.iseai.org

Other helpful resources: www.themoldguyinc.com www.themoldpros.com
www.americanmoldexperts.com

Find a Certified Mold Remediator:

Mold remediations often fail because most remediation companies only address the areas with visible mold growth. Or they remediate improperly. If you hire a mold inspector (and you should!) he/she should be able to recommend a certified mold remediator in your area.

You can also use this site to verify or locate a professional... www.normipro.com
National Organization of Remediators and Mold Inspectors is a cooperative group of certified professionals.

Questions to Ask Before, During, and After Remediation:

1. Do you require mold testing or an inspection prior to your remediation?

If they offer mold testing prior to remediation, that is a conflict of interest and illegal in some states. They should require inspection/testing and a remediation plan from a separate company. Also, the same inspector should provide testing post-remediation. If the inspector does not 'pass' the remediation work, there should be no added cost to you for the remediation company to come back and finish the remediation properly. (The post inspection should not be merely visual — the same testing protocols should be in place.)

2. Are the people doing the work certified in mold remediation?

Even though there may be certified mold remediators working for the company, that doesn't guarantee they will be the people doing the work. I used a certified company but the workers were not familiar with negative pressure and opened the secured area where they were working releasing mold spores into other areas of the house.

FYI, 'negative pressure' in the work area is crucial to be sure air flow is directed outside of the home to ensure mold spores are not carried by air flow to other parts of your home.

For this reason, it is important to have a certified worker on site each day during the project. Also, be sure to ask for a list of licenses and certifications.

3. Can you explain *fine particular remediation*?

Be sure they go through this very thorough cleaning procedure with you. (It involves a full home wipe-down and cleaning of the source areas and any cabinetry, etc.)

4. Have you performed remediation for clients with CIRS?

They should have a basic understanding of the client's needs based on their health condition.

5. Can you explain the ERMI/HERTSMI samples to me?

The company should have, at a minimum, a basic understanding of mold sample testing.

Do not be embarrassed or afraid to ask these questions. It could save you not only thousands of dollars but potentially dangerous ongoing exposure post-remediation. If they are a reputable company, they will have no problem answering these questions and will likely be impressed you know so much!

More Resources:

www.survivingmold.com This was the first website I went to as it is loaded with info! Ritchie Shoemaker, M. D., is a recognized leader in the field of biotoxin-related illness.

www.carpathiacollaborative.com Dr. Margaret Christiansen — Certified Functional Medicine Practitioner and board certified in Integrative and Holistic Medicine has tons of valuable info!

www.dr cristina.com Dr. Jill Crista - mold illness survivor with many resources/product discounts.

www.jillcarnahan.com Love her! Dr. Jill is dually board certified in Family Medicine and Integrative Holistic Medicine. She is a survivor of both breast cancer and Crohn's disease and passionate about teaching patients how to thrive in the midst of complex and chronic illness. (Search the archive articles on Mold Exposure)

www.pjharlowwellness.com PJ Harlow is a Holistic Mold Consultant, Cleaning & Decontamination Expert. She, too, was a victim of mold.

www.themoldguyinc.com Another great resource for mold info.

www.betterhealthguy.com Scott Forsgren, FDN-P (Functional Diagnostic Nutrition Practitioner) who has lived with multiple chronic illnesses.

www.blog.daveasprey.com Dave Asprey lived through mold illness and started the Bulletproof brand to provide toxin-free coffee and nutritional products.

www.moldymovie.com Dave Asprey's movie

www.paradigmchange.me A wide variety of information related to chronic mold-related illness and environmental toxicity. It is run by Lisa Petrisson, Ph.D.

[Mold Masterclass](#) Run by Brian Karr — a second-generation environmental consultant and a council Certified Microbial Investigator who works solely with clients dealing with complex medical conditions.

www.ehtrust.org for info on how EMFs can hinder mold detoxification.

Products:

www.moldfreeliving.com

www.microbalancehealthproducts.com

www.biobalancenow.com

Mold toxicity, whether in the home, the body, or both, is quickly evolving with many experts providing new research, science, and personal experiences. That's why you should not rely on a single expert in your healing/remediating journey. The resources I've mentioned are just a sample of the many experts out there.

Please share this information with anyone you know who may be experiencing health issues due to mold!

Disclaimer: I am not a medical professional. I am not providing healthcare, medical, or nutritional services or attempting to diagnose, treat, prevent, or cure any physical, mental, or emotional issue. This information is for education purposes only.