

HEALTHY, WEALTHY & WISE

August 2020

Published exclusively for clients of Service First Restoration

MOLD The Silent Pest

Say the word “pests” and people think about common household varieties such as ants, roaches, and spiders or even mice and rats. But did you know that molds are also considered pests? That’s right. Pests are generally defined as undesirable organisms that are detrimental to humans or human concerns.

Some molds produce gases called mycotoxins that can cause sickness and allergic reactions in humans. There are molds, such as wood-destroying fungi, that cause property damage. Children 2 years and younger are especially susceptible to mold-related illness. Serious complications can result from prolonged exposure. So it is good to know a few things about mold so you can avoid having a problem in your home.

What is mold? Molds are fungi that feed on nonliving organic matter. In nature, mold and other fungi are responsible for breaking down dead leaves, plant material and wood. Mold derives energy from these materials by secreting enzymes that break them down into simpler compounds that the mold can absorb. This break down is a necessary part of Earth’s ecosystem.

See “MOLD” on next page



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Molds are ubiquitous; they are found everywhere. Some species of mold can survive in sub-freezing temperatures, while others will thrive in extremely high temperatures of the desert, gaining what little moisture is available from the air. Some molds can even grow on diesel fuel and other chemicals like anti-freeze.

The two most common molds found in indoor living environments are *Aspergillus* and *Penicillium*. Given a food source, suitable temperature and elevated moisture or humidity, these molds can begin to grow and flourish on many surfaces within a home. Molds travel from one location to another by releasing microscopic, seed-like spores which can remain dormant for a very long time. When conditions are right, spores begin to grow into an active mold colony.

Stachybotrys is another mold,

often referred to as “toxic black mold”, which has gotten massive media attention. *Stachybotrys* is a sticky, slimy mold that grows on surfaces such as drywall, wood, and even paper on insulation. While *Aspergillus* and *Penicillium* can begin to grow in only a couple of days, *Stachybotrys* needs at least 7-12 days of constant moisture, warm temperatures around 70-80 degrees and minimal air movement. Therefore, you are most likely to encounter it in your home if you have an ongoing water intrusion from plumbing, foundation problems, roof or window leaks, etc. Note that you may not see it because it tends to flourish in dark areas where it will not be disturbed.

Since *Stachybotrys* is a sticky, slimy mold, the spores rarely become airborne. However, it may begin to release spores if it begins to dry out. It can also release mycotoxins into the air as a defense

mechanism against other fungi. Spores and mycotoxins can be transported into the breathable air of the home and create symptoms such as cough, headaches, asthma, rhinitis and other allergic reactions. In some cases, infants or others with underdeveloped or compromised immune systems can have serious, even life-threatening, pulmonary complications.

What should you do if you find mold? If you have any type of mold in your home or business, it must be removed. The visible presence of any mold is an indicator that there may be more unseen hiding elsewhere.

Because mold can potentially harm people who live and work in structures, you should call **Service First Restoration** so that we can identify the cause and develop a strategy to solve the problem and remove the mold.

The Good Life



Good Clean Funnies

Son, I don't think you're cut out to be a mime.' 'Was it something I said?' asks the son. 'Yes.'

I'd like to start with the chimney jokes - I've got a stack of them. The first one is on the house.



This is the perfect summer drink when it is hot and humid outside.



Watermelon Agua Fresca

Directions

Scoop flesh from watermelon half and transfer watermelon to a blender. Add 2 cups cold water. Place a folded towel on blender lid and blend until liquefied, about 1 minute. Strain through a fine mesh strainer into a large bowl to remove fibers. Discard fibers left in strainer. Skim and discard excess foam from juice if desired.

Place sugar and 1/2 cup water into a saucepan over medium heat and stir until water is hot and sugar has dissolved. Turn off heat and let simple syrup cool to room temperature. Stir simple syrup into watermelon juice to taste.

Pour drink into a 2-quart pitcher and refrigerate until cold, at least 30 minutes. To serve, fill tall glasses with ice cubes and pour agua fresca drink over ice. Serve with straws.

Ingredients

1/2 seedless watermelon

2 cups cold water

1/2 cup white sugar, or to taste

1/2 cup water

Recipe courtesy allrecipes.com



Weight Training to SAVE Muscles



Though it is not an inevitable consequence of aging, everyone is at risk. Men and women appear to lose the same percentage of muscle.

Between the ages of 30 and 70, adults typically lose at least 20 percent of their muscle tissue. For those over age 30, the good news is that muscle loss can be reduced and even reversed by weight lifting.

Research also shows that older adults who have been lifting weights for 15 to 20 years or doing resistance training, are as strong as inactive 20-year-olds.

Resistance training is any type of exercise performed in one place while standing, sitting, or lying down. It includes leg lifts, arm curls, and abdom-

inal crunches. Such movements can be performed using free-weights, weight machines, or by working against gravity.

The goal is to challenge the targeted muscles by performing at least three sets of eight to twelve repetitions, and to gradually increase the amount of weight used.

In addition to slowing muscle loss, weight training also increases the rate at which the body burns calories, increases bone density, decreases the risk of diabetes, and increases HDL, the "good" cholesterol.

AFFORDABLE College Education



Today's students have excellent options for their pathway to higher education. They include traditional and community colleges, online courses, or combinations of all three.

Online courses engage students in class material and activities on his or her schedule. This freedom allows students to complete work and family commitments with more flexibility.

Many course lectures, course work, and discussion boards, among others, are available around the clock.

Online programs can dramatically

decrease or eliminate most of the costs associated with college. With student loan debt now exceeding the entire nation's credit card debt, any chance to cut the cost of college today is worth investigating and considering.

The advantages of initiating one's pursuits of higher education at a community college include the flexibility, cost of courses, and the capacity to transfer degrees earned to time-honored institutions of higher learning. Many community colleges also offer online class options.



Online college programs can be every bit as rigorous as any form of higher education.



Dog Days of SUMMER



These are the hottest days of the year, variously calculated to run from 30 to 54 days spanning from July 3 to August 11.

Though they are named after our canine friends, dogs have nothing to do with the name. In ancient times when Sirius, The Dog Star, rose just before the sun, people believed that the star was the cause of the hot weather and named the short season after the star.

All of that was before air conditioning and modern medicine eliminated the worst suffering. But hot weather can still get you down, Dog Days or not.

Watch out for heat exhaustion. If you get pale, sweat profusely, have a weak, rapid pulse, queasy stomach and head-

ache or dizziness, get yourself to a cool place and lie down. Sponge your skin and stay near a fan. Drink something cool (not iced). If symptoms last see your doctor.

Heatstroke is much more serious and requires medical attention. Symptoms include dizziness, rapid heartbeat, diarrhea or nausea, and hot, dry skin with no perspiration. Cool anyone with these symptoms as for heat exhaustion but also place ice packs under armpits, behind the neck, and on the groin while waiting for an ambulance.





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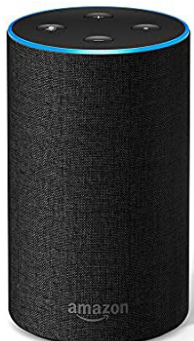
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