

HEALTHY, WEALTHY & WISE

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MOLD... What's the BIG DEAL?

"Black Mold Forces Family to Move"... "The Hidden Dangers of Toxic Mold"... "Is Your House Making You Sick?" Headlines like these are used to shine a spotlight on the health risks associated with mold. Naturally, the more extreme stories get the most interest. But is mold really as bad as they say? Where does it come from? How can you prevent it?

In 2004, the Institute of Medicine found sufficient evidence to link indoor exposure to mold with upper respiratory tract symptoms including coughing, sneezing and wheezing in otherwise healthy individuals. People with asthma and allergies often see a marked increase in the incidence and severity of their symptoms. Those with compromised or underdeveloped

immune systems can suffer from serious infections caused by mold.

Mold needs 3 things to grow: The right environment, a food source, and moisture. High humidity is one contributing factor. A relative humidity (RH) range is between 30% and 50% is required for human health and comfort. Once the RH rises above 60%, mold growth

See "MOLD" on next page



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is encouraged. If RH remains high for extended periods of days, weeks or longer, some mold species can thrive on surfaces that are not even wet. Controlling humidity and ventilation in your bathroom, laundry area, basement or crawl space is the best way to prevent mold in these areas.

Indoor mold flourishes from 65°F to 85°F. Mold grows more easily where air is still or stagnant. That's why it is usually found behind cabinets, inside walls or in damp crawl spaces and basements.

Non-living organic matter like wood, paper, dust and lint, leather, many fabrics and even wool rugs can become a food source for mold. This can cause destructive damage to these materials as the mold uses enzymes to break down organic matter into simpler compounds it can digest.

But moisture is the primary catalyst for mold growth. Mold cannot grow unless humidity is extremely high or there is a supply of water available. Excessive moisture from flooding, broken pipes, condensation, roof leaks or foundation leaks is what causes the majority of problems.

Since we generally cannot remove the potential food sources or dramatically change the temperature or the amount of airflow in the places mold likes to hide, your most effective prevention is moisture control. A small plumbing leak, roof damage or foundation crack can provide all the moisture needed for mold growth. Don't delay making necessary repairs.

How do you know if you have mold? Mold usually gives off an unpleasant musty odor produced by decomposing organic matter.

Of course, another sign is if you see something that looks like mold.

Mold can be just about any color; don't just look for black or green discolorations. Check any areas where there is excessive moisture or humidity and stagnant air.

Remember any mold growing indoors should be carefully and completely removed. Caution must be exercised to avoid spreading the contamination to other areas. Of course the humidity or moisture situation that caused the mold should be corrected as soon as possible. Otherwise the mold will return to the same areas.

If you have questions or think you have a moisture or mold problem in your home, call **ServiceFirst Restoration** as soon as possible. We will help identify and correct the problem and avoid further property damage or health concerns.

The Good Life



Good Clean Funnies

What do you think of that new diner on the moon?

Food was good, but there really wasn't much atmosphere.

How does a scientist freshen her breath?

With experi-mints.

How do you talk to a giant?

Use big words.



SPRING Salad with Blueberry Balsamic Dressing

Directions

Toss spring greens, strawberries, 1 cup blueberries, blue cheese, and walnuts together in a bowl.

Blend remaining blueberries, balsamic vinegar, olive oil, honey, and mustard together in a blender until dressing is smooth. Season with salt and black pepper. Pour dressing over salad and toss to coat.

You can substitute goat cheese for the blue cheese, if desired.
You can substitute pecans or almonds for the walnuts, if desired.
You can substitute maple syrup for the honey, if desired.

SERVES 4.

SALAD

- 2 cups mixed spring greens
- 1 cup sliced strawberries
- 1 cup blueberries
- ½ cup crumbled blue cheese
- ½ cup toasted walnuts (or pecans)

DRESSING

- 2 ¼ cups fresh blueberries
- ¼ cup balsamic vinegar
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 ½ teaspoons honey
- 1 ½ teaspoons Dijon mustard
- Salt and ground black pepper to taste

Recipe courtesy allrecipes.com

Ingredients





Prepare for your visit - ask about your healthcare provider's safety guidelines, also bring anything your baby might need (like diapers, wipes, a bottle).



5 Reasons to Keep BABY'S Wellness Visits

If you have a little one, remember your regular in-person wellness visits and vaccinations will ensure your baby stays healthy, even in these uncertain times. In fact, **eight** well-child visits are recommended between birth and 15 months.

Here are the main reasons for keeping up with your baby's regular wellness visits

1. Your pediatrician can identify concerns - Seeing your baby in person helps a pediatrician identify signs of illness or developmental concerns, and give prompt treatment to keep them healthy.

2. Your infant needs immunizations - The CDC recommends early vaccinations to help protect babies when they are most vulnerable against many dangerous diseases. Schools and daycares require all children to be immunized.

Keeping your family's immunizations up-to-date creates a circle of protection especially around babies.

3. Remember to ask questions - Some common questions you might ask your pediatrician are below:

- Should my baby sleep on their back?
- Should I use formula while I am still breastfeeding?
- Is my baby behind in development?

4. Pediatricians can provide resources - such as help finding childcare, getting a car seat or food assistance, baby-proofing your house or with any other concerns.

5. Well-child visits are usually covered by insurance - Call your health insurance provider to ask about your family's coverage.

Achieve GARAGE Greatness on a BUDGET



Here are five easy upgrades to turn your garage into a productive, fun-filled place.

1. Clean and organize - Do a deep clean. Take stock of your tools and consider new ways to store and organize them. Getting your equipment up off the floor will leave you space for projects and family fun.

2. Heat it up - To create a year-round garage, the walls and ceilings must be insulated correctly. Also, a workshop heater will warm up a two- or three-car garage, allowing you to work and play comfortably in your space no matter the outside temperature.

3. Let in the light - Most garages have one or two light bulbs hanging from the ceiling. Adding an industrial-style light fixture or customizable, track lighting is an

inexpensive way to make it easier to work on projects and much more inviting for casual hang-outs.

4. Bring on the entertainment - To reach real **GARAGE GREATNESS**, it is all about entertainment. The garage is a great place for football Sundays and video games. Adding a flat screen and extra speakers can provide a complete experience. If you plan on game nights, poker or ping-pong tables can be added and folded up when not in use.

5. Get comfortable - Comfortable, durable, versatile seating is important. Whether its recliners, a sofa, stools or a combination, look for furniture that fits your space. A side bar with a refrigerator to keep cool drinks and snacks on hand is another great addition to a really **great garage**.



Now is the perfect time to create more living space in your home. Whether you need a place to destress, get some work done or host friends and family, look no further than your own garage!



3 FIRE Safety Tips That Could Save Your LIFE



It is particularly concerning that people think they will have time to gather important items, ignoring the likelihood that the toxic smoke will have reduced visibility and can cause harm quickly.

Many people underestimate the danger of a home fire. Once a house fire starts, you have approximately **three minutes** or less to escape before the space becomes completely unlivable.

Here are three simple, potentially life-saving fire safety behaviors people can adopt to give them more time to respond and escape in the event of a fire:

1. Check Your Smoke Alarms - Have working smoke alarms on every floor of your home, including inside and outside every sleeping area. Check your smoke alarms monthly and replace them every 10 years. Smoke alarms give you and your loved ones the earliest possible warning that there is a fire.

2. Create an Escape Plan - Have an escape plan and practice it; know two ways to get out if there is a fire. If smoke blocks a door or your first way out, use your second choice. Also, if your first way out is blocked, get a closed door between you and the fire to buy time to use your second way out, especially if that requires escaping out a window.

3. Close Before You Doze - A closed door can be an effective barrier against deadly levels of carbon monoxide, smoke and flames, and may give you more time to respond to the smoke alarm. In fact, there can be a 900-degree Fahrenheit difference in room temperature between a room with an open door and one with a closed door, with the open-door room reaching temperatures of 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit or more.





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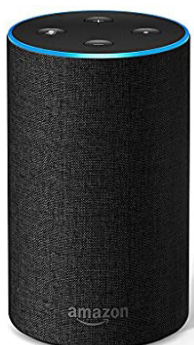
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