

## MOLD... *What's the BIG DEAL?*



You have noticed a ***persistent***, earthy, musty smell in a certain part of your home, maybe in the laundry room, under a kitchen sink, or in a bathroom closet. You can't see anything obviously wrong, but the unpleasant odor just won't seem to go away. That musty smell is a classic red flag and is often the very first sign that you have a hidden mold problem.

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.

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 decomposition 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 and growing mold colony. There are molds, such as wood-destroying fungi, that cause property dam-

age. 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, undisturbed areas.

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.

If you have any type of mold in your home or business, it must be removed as soon as possible. The visible presence of any mold is an indicator that there may be more unseen mold hiding elsewhere.

Because mold can be harmful, call **ServiceFirst Restoration** to identify the cause and develop a strategy to solve the problem and remove the mold.

## The Good Life



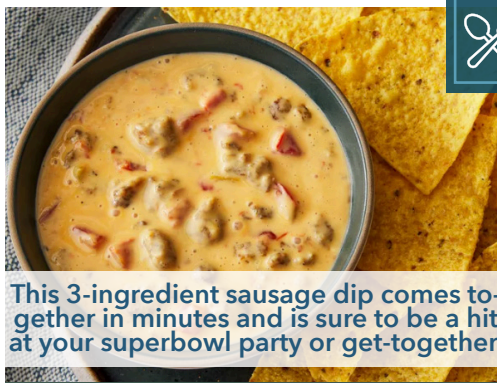
### Good Clean Funnies

**What do you call a bear with no teeth?** A gummy bear!

**Why did two 4s skip dinner?** Because they already 8!

**What do you call a train with a cold?** A-choo choo train!

**What do you call a line of rabbits jumping backwards?** A receding hare-line!



This 3-ingredient sausage dip comes together in minutes and is sure to be a hit at your superbowl party or get-together.

### Ingredients

- 1 pound Velveeta, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1 (10 ounce) can Rotel Diced Tomatoes and Green Chilies, undrained
- 1/2 pound breakfast pork sausage, cooked, drained

**Prep Time:** 5 mins

**Cook Time:** 5 mins

**Total Time:** 10 mins

**Servings:** 32

## VELVEETA Spicy Dip

### Directions

Gather all ingredients.

Mix Velveeta, tomatoes, and cooked pork sausage together in a microwave-safe bowl.

Microwave on high for 3 minutes. Stir, and microwave until Velveeta is completely melted, about 2 more minutes.

**Serve with tortilla chips or your favorite crackers.**

### Recipe Tips

If your guests like a little extra heat, fire up their taste buds by preparing this creamy, zesty recipe with Rotel Hot Diced Tomatoes and Green Chilies and Velveeta Jalapeño.

Store leftover dip in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 3 days. Reheat dip in the microwave before serving.

*Recipe courtesy allrecipes.com*





## FAMILY MATTERS: Why Genetic Cancer Testing is Important

For people who have a family history of cancer, the possibility of what genetic testing might reveal can be scary, yet having answers can be empowering.

According to the latest surveys, 80% of women report being afraid to get screened for cancer, primarily due to fear of the results. That said, 75% say they would actually find screenings like genetic testing reassuring if they were facing a potential health concern.

**Getting tested:** If you have family history of cancer, see if you meet the guideline criteria for genetic testing.

### A simple test that gives you options:

This test evaluates a patient's risk of developing 11 different types of hereditary cancer and provides a 5-year and remaining lifetime personalized risk for breast cancer. The test is a quick blood draw at the clinician's office.

If you're on the fence about getting tested for BRCA1, BRCA2 or other hereditary cancer mutations, consider if you have the following risk factors:

- A family history of cancer that is diagnosed at 50 or younger, (like breast cancer).
- Multiples of the same type of cancers on the same side of the family, like three colorectal cancers on the paternal side
- Rare cancers like ovarian or pancreatic cancer

If you have a family history of cancer and the slightest doubt that you could carry a gene mutation associated with cancer, get this simple blood test. Understanding your results can empower you and your care team to create a personalized plan to manage your risk and take proactive steps for your health.

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**When someone in your family is diagnosed with cancer, it can raise questions. Is it a coincidence, or is there something that runs in the family?**

## 5 SIMPLE Ways to Personalize your Bathroom



### 1. Hang artwork that reflects your taste.

Hanging artwork in the bathroom is the easiest way to add personality. Find photos and prints with plants and trees in bright greens, reds and yellows. Or, use that art you've either purchased or been gifted by a friend, they will look right at home in your bathroom.

**Pro tip:** Choose waterproof frames that protect your art from humidity.

### 2. Update hardware to express your style.

The hardware you choose sets the tone and style of a bathroom. If you currently have cool polished silver drawer pulls, faucets, towel bars and other fixtures, consider switching to warm gold or bronze hardware with a brushed finish.

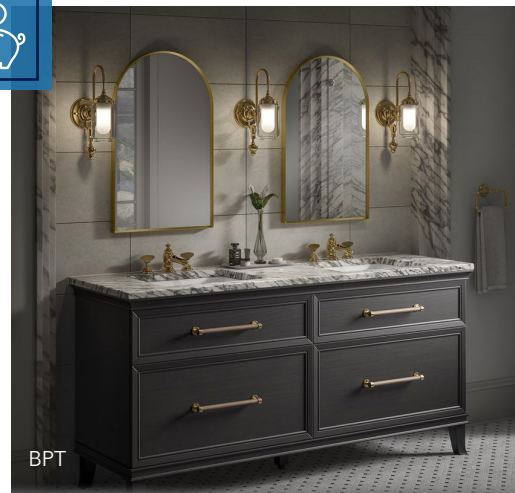
**3. Add a spa-like feel with plants.** Turn your bathroom into a tranquil retreat with plants. Adding plants can bring a sterile room to life and soften those hard lines. Choose plants that

thrive in humidity, like calatheas, monsteras, pothos, orchids or ferns. Look for planters that match your aesthetic or color scheme.

### 4. Control the ambiance with lighting.

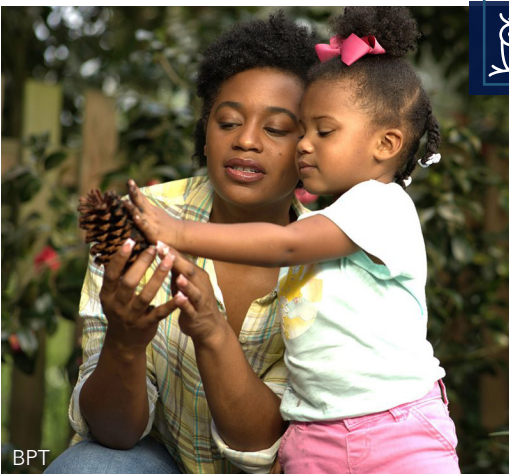
Changing the lighting in your bathroom allows you to effortlessly control the ambiance. Dimmable white lights create a cozy atmosphere, but still offer enough illumination for shaving and applying makeup. Installing a dimmer switch allows you to adjust brightness to create a sunlike mood or a soothing evening glow.

**5. Add color and texture with paint and wallpaper.** Finally, a new coat of paint or wallpaper can do wonders for a bathroom. Tired of sterile white walls? Try baby blue or sage green to create a serene setting or warm reds and pinks for a homey feel. For textures and patterns, from florals to faux stone to geometric shapes look for wallpaper that reflects your theme.,



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**With these five simple tips you can turn your no-frill utilitarian bathroom into a relaxing space with a personalized feel, even if you are on a budget.**



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**With access to more news and social media than generations past, Gen Z parents are faced with more options than ever before when it comes to raising their own kids.**



## How GEN Zers are Parenting Differently from their PARENTS

A new survey of 2,000 parents of children ages 0-6 found that more than four in five parents polled agree that there's no "one size fits all" approach when it comes to parenting, as they blend an average of three different parenting styles. *They are listed below.*

### Tough love trumps warm-and-fuzzy:

More than half prioritize preparing their child for the real world. This paradigm shift in parenting reflects the real-world focus of Gen Zers compared to previous generations, notably their own parents. It's more "actions have consequences" than "trophies for everyone." Younger parents follow their own intuition slightly more than they follow their parents' advice.

**Gen Z parents face generational trauma head on:** Despite Gen Z being the first generation raised with "gentle parenting" in mind, most of them lean more towards "cycle-breaking par-

enting" which focuses on healing generational trauma by actively identifying and addressing negative family patterns. This parenting style requires self-awareness, empathy, courage to face unresolved issues, and emotions.

**Gen Zers parent each child uniquely:** The majority of Gen Zers are choosing parenting styles based on what their individual child needs - rather than trying to make their preferred style work regardless of their child's personality. And they're tailoring their parenting style to suit the circumstances as well as the child.

Perhaps because they're having fewer children than previous generations and delaying having children due to the desire to achieve financial stability first, Gen Zers plan to be less traditional about raising children. They have a strong desire to make the world a better place and model this outlook for their children. Z



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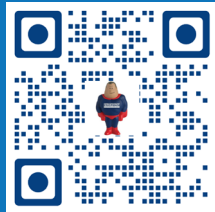
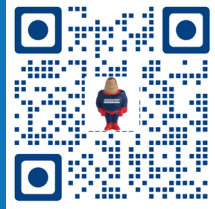
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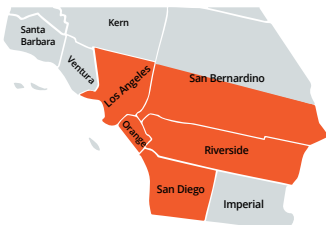
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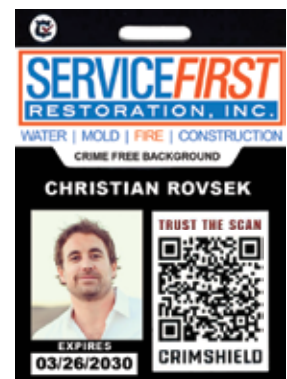


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