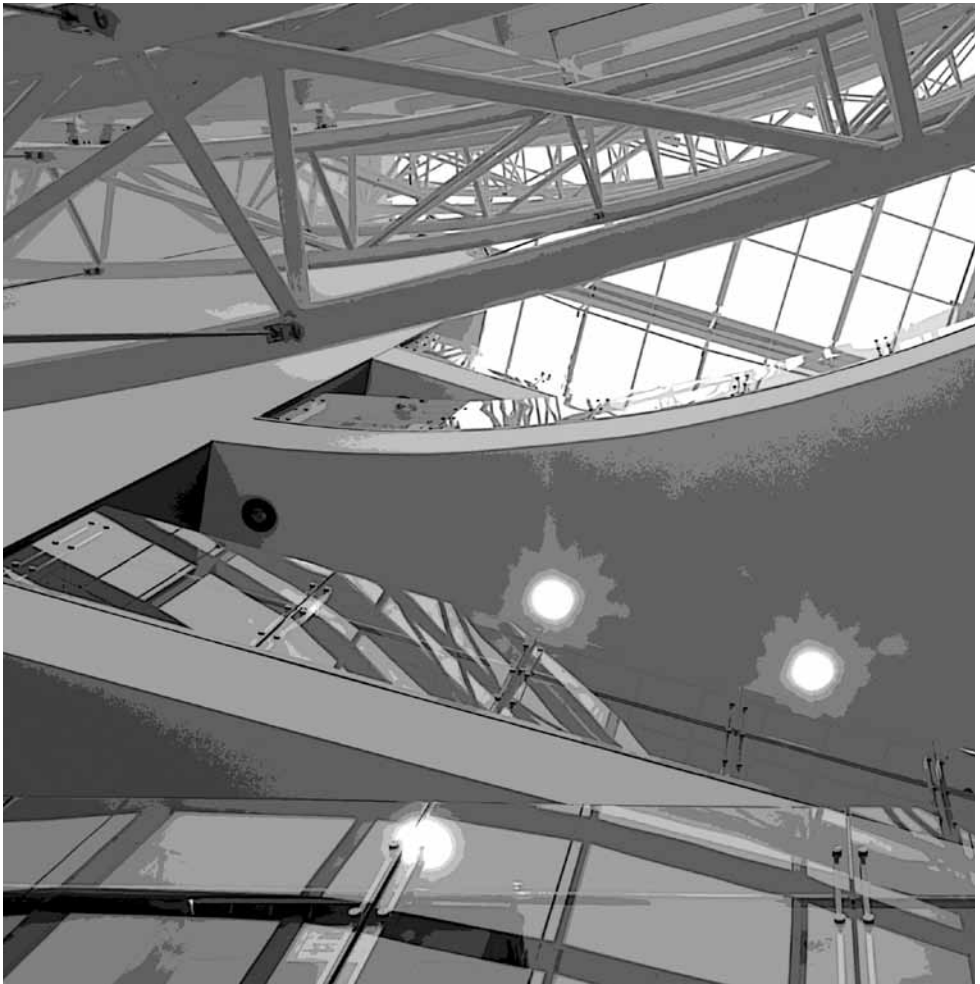


Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals **NHS**
NHS Trust

ENT Outpatients, The West Wing

Allergy Advice - Moulds

Information for patients



The skin prick test has shown you have an allergy to moulds. This leaflet gives you more information about moulds and some things you can do to help reduce your symptoms.

More about moulds

Moulds are a type of fungus which cause an allergy in some people. If you're allergic to moulds, you have a reaction when you breathe in the tiny seeds (called spores) that they release into the air.

You can be exposed to moulds all year round. Outside, moulds grow on rotting logs and fallen leaves, in compost heaps, and on some grasses and weeds. Indoors, moulds grow on food that is going off, and in damp places such as on window frames in kitchens and bathrooms, in refrigerators, under wallpaper, and on the soil of houseplants.

There are many different types of mould, but only a few cause allergies.

What happens when you are allergic to moulds?

Your immune system reacts abnormally to something that is normally harmless, causing symptoms in the eyes, nose, throat and lungs. This reaction is called rhinitis, or hay fever. People who have an allergy to moulds are likely to suffer all year round and to have some or all of the following symptoms:

- A blocked and/or runny nose
- Sneezing
- Coughing
- Itching (throat, nose, eyes)
- Wheezing.

How can I reduce my exposure to moulds?

It may not always be practical to follow all of this advice all of the time, but the following steps will help to reduce your symptoms.

- Keep damp areas such as bathrooms well ventilated.
- Keep bathroom surfaces clean and mould free.
- Keep refrigerators clean and dispose of any food that is becoming mouldy.
- Avoid damp and musty buildings and any place where hay is stored.
- Avoid cutting grass, raking leaves and turning compost heaps.
- Avoid wooded or leafy areas, particularly after rainfall.
- Do not store clothing or shoes in damp cupboards; leave wardrobe doors slightly open to ventilate the clothes.
- Reduce humidity by opening windows and turning heating down.

Further information

You can get more information from:

www.allergyuk.org; Helpline 01322 619898

www.healthy-house.co.uk; 0845 450 5950 (Local rate call)

www.allergymatters.com

www.netdoctor.co.uk

You may also telephone the ENT Nurse Practitioner on:

Oxford (01865) 231182

If you need an interpreter or need a document in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221473** or email **PALSJR@orh.nhs.uk**

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Version 2, April 2010
Review date April 2013

OMI 1812