

TEST ANSWERS: Mould Safety

1. All Canadian federal and provincial occupational health and safety associations, and public health agencies, consider mould growth inside buildings to be a risk factor for health problems.

a) True

b) False

RATIONALE: Health Canada recommends that mould growth be prevented by appropriate and timely control of moisture sources and that mould growth is removed using established remediation policies and procedures.

2. Moisture is the key factor in mould growth. In buildings, moisture is present as the result of: (Circle all that apply)

a) Flooding

b) Leaks in the roof or plumbing

c) Sealed buildings that do not allow excess moisture to escape

d) Sources such as cooking facilities or showers

e) Excess humidity

RATIONALE: A major cause of mould growth is poor ventilation and common problem areas include kitchens, bathrooms, and basements. Mould is typically present because of flooding, leaks, excess moisture that does not escape and excess humidity in areas like showers, cooking facilities, etc.

3. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that all moulds should be treated the same in terms of health risk and removal.

a) True

b) False

RATIONALE: While it is interesting to identify what type of mould may be growing in the building, it is not necessary to identify the type(s) present. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that *all moulds* should be treated the same in terms of health risk and removal.

4. All the following are common health effects due to mould exposure: (Circle all that apply)

a) Eye, nose and throat irritation

b) Muscle cramping

c) Coughing and mucous build-up

d) Wheezing and shortness of breath

e) Worsening of asthma symptoms

RATIONALE: For most people, exposure to mould doesn't cause any immediate or significant health effects. However, if a person has a weakened immune system, the health effects can be severe. Common health effects include eye, nose and throat irritation, coughing and mucous, wheezing, worsening of asthma symptoms. Muscle cramping is not a common health effect because of mould exposure.

5. It is important to remember that once the mould clean-up is done, the underlying cause must be fixed to prevent more mould from growing again.

a) True

b) False

RATIONALE: In general, once mould has been discovered, it is recommended that porous materials such as dry wall, ceiling tiles, fabric or carpet be thrown out and replaced rather than cleaned whenever possible. Non-porous materials such as metal, glass, hard plastic and semi-porous materials such as wood and concrete can be cleaned and reused (if structurally sound). However, it is important to fix the underlying cause (water damage, too much humidity or not enough ventilation) to prevent more mould growth.