

# **I Think My Home Has Mold, Now What?**

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Maybe you will be a fortunate person that will never ask yourself this question, but for the less fortunate ones out there, what should you do? Well step one in my book is, have your home assessed by a certified and knowledgeable professional. You will more than likely incur a fee for this so be prepared, but you wouldn't go to the doctor and expect him to diagnose and treat you without paying something would you?

The indoor environmental professional (IEP) should conduct a very thorough and complete investigation of your home and the issues that you present them with, keeping in mind your health and safety and not to expose your home to more than need be on the investigation. Don't be surprised that they uncover more than you expected or knew about, remember that they are the experts and deal with this on a day to day basis. If you have questions, ASK! Most of us, IEPs, love to answer questions and talk about mold; we want you to be informed of what is being uncovered and found. Remember, you are paying us, so you are the boss, we work for you.

Some problems that I have seen with the do-it-yourself and inexperienced person is that they will try and bite off more than they can chew so to speak, and wind up having a bigger problem on their hands than when they initially started. Now their family is sick from the exposure that they were subjected to, and the problem still isn't gone. Most of this can be avoided by having an expert assess and remediate it for you. I can understand that the cost may be more than you can afford at that given point in time, and if that is the case, leave it alone until you can afford it. The greatest amount of spore release and exposure is during the remediation, so my point is, don't disturb it until you can take care of it.

In some cases I have seen, contractors will claim to be "experts" and tell you that they have done this before, it's not a big problem and they will do it cheap. They might have done it before, but was the end result successful? I would ask this person for multiple references and a list of their credentials that would classify them as being competent in mold assessment or removal. Oh yes, are they insured for this kind of work? Special insurance is needed for a mold contractor. With the lack of proper insurance, their work may not be covered by their policy, leaving you with a potential litigation case. By the time you pay for a good attorney, you could have just paid a competent, certified and insured company to come do the work the right way, saving you a huge headache.

The bottom line is that it is your home, your family, and your health that is in this person's hands, and if inexperienced, all of these may be negatively impacted.