

Studies Show Link between Asthma and Mold

For quite a few years, I have been reading numerous case studies from scientific researchers around the globe about the links between asthma, dampness and mold. I've patiently been waiting for the government to stand up and willingly say that indoor air quality issues from mold cause adverse health effects. I'm sure glad that I haven't been holding my breath.

Hopefully that may change soon. The World Health Organization recently published its first guidelines on Indoor Air Quality on July 21, 2009 specifically addressing issues related to dampness and mold.

The guidelines are a result of a rigorous two year review of the science of 36 leading experts worldwide, coordinated by the WHO Regional Office for Europe.

According to the findings of the WHO, occupants of damp or moldy buildings have a 75% greater risk of respiratory issues and asthma than occupants of buildings with better indoor air quality. This is a finding that should not be overlooked by parents, grandparents, school officials, business owners, the government, or other authorities.

A case study that was conducted and published in the Environmental Health Perspectives Volume 107, Supplement 3, in June of 1999 indicated that there was an elevated risk in the development of asthma in children who were exposed to mold and damp buildings. This study was organized with 15 scientists from 8 different countries and the participants agreed that exposure to molds may constitute a health threat to children resulting in respiratory symptoms in both the upper and lower airways, as well as an increased incidence of infections, and skin symptoms. It is important to note that this study was conducted 10 years ago, and we are just now seeing the information.

Another study was conducted by Dr. Dorr G. Dearborn, PhD, MD for the WHO in Europe. This study was quite in depth, with 104 dwellings monitored with mold growth and occupants who have mild cases of asthma. The objective of the study was to examine the asthma morbidity in children as a result of mold remediation and moisture control within the dwellings. In this randomized controlled trial, one group received remediation of the moisture and mold issues, the others received general house cleaning information. The results of the study were quite simple. The remediation group showed significant decreases in symptom days, whereas the control group did not. The remediation group also had a lower rate of asthmatic exacerbations.

I am glad that an organization has finally stepped up to the plate. I am hopeful that this will lead us in the right direction to protecting our families and ourselves from the potential health hazards that are associated with mold exposure and damp buildings.

