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Mold, toxins: Hidden killers in your home and what you can do to rid your home of them (Part 1)-By Luke Krcil, MS

Research and clinical experience show anxiety, fatigue, ADHD, depression, allergies, asthma, diabetes, strokes, heart attack, cancer, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's Disease, and a plethora of other 'symptoms' may be linked to environmental toxins and pollutants. These symptoms are simply a reflection of root causes fueled by toxin-fueled chronic inflammation, plus toxic damage to the immune, cardiovascular, and neurological systems.

Sources of these toxins are usually found in our home and work environments. Health professionals are becoming increasingly aware that a healthy home starts with pure air and water.

The Air We Breathe

Air pollution may not always be visible but can be deadly. World Health Organization data indicates air pollution causes 36% of lung cancer deaths, 34% of stroke deaths, and 27% of deaths from heart disease. Yet, autopsies often label the cause of death as a disease rather than its cause.

Three categories of pollutants

taint indoor air: (1) Pathogens, (2) Particulate Matter, and (3) Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC's). The sources primarily come from (1) building water damage (past and present), (2) a poorly designed and maintained heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) system, (3) carpets, cleaning supplies, furniture, etc., and (4) accumulation of clutter and poor home hygiene.

Pathogens include mold, bacteria, viruses, dust mites, and a collection of by-products called biotoxins. Particulate matter includes airborne dust, fiberglass fragments from the air system ducts, and pet dander. VOC's include airborne chemicals like formaldehyde.

Indoor air pollution may cause allergies, chronic inflammatory responses, neurological damage, and a substrate for arterial plaque when absorbed through the lungs into the bloodstream. These responses may lead to dozens of 'mystery symptoms' in our body not easily explained.

Over 50% of buildings in the USA have a history of water damage that has not been properly reme-



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diated. The situation has grown worse over the last 10 years following the housing crisis and lack of funds to address issues. These buildings have come to be known as WDB's or water-damaged buildings. About 28% of the population is genetically susceptible to biotoxins from WDB's. Rough calculations estimate that as many as 52 million Americans are being harmed and expressing 'mystery symptoms' with no obvious cause.

Another common source of biotoxins and particulate matter is the HVAC system where condensation and particulate accumulation can set up a breeding ground for toxic mold and bacteria. The system continually circulates pathogens, biotoxins, and harmful particulates throughout the building. Home, school, and office environments can be a source of disease transmission fueled by the air system.

Humidity levels of 60% or higher fuel mold growth beyond the HVAC system as well. Locations can include: attics, window sills, underneath sinks, refrigerator door seals and drain pans, closets, clothing, shoes, furniture, laundry rooms, washing machines, basement walls, under baseboards, and in garbage containers. Mold begins to grow within 24 to 36 hours with sufficient humidity and with even very small amounts of water.

Steps to Pure Safe Indoor Air Step 1 - Remove Sources and Causes of Toxic Air

Lower humidity immediately! Install dehumidifiers and monitor humidity. Otherwise, the building environment quickly becomes a mold-growing factory. Portable dehumidifiers often come with "pumps" that can automatically empty into drains easing the need to empty tanks and annoying 'tank full' beeps in the night.

Along with poorly designed HVAC, malfunctioning HVAC, and poorly sized HVAC, beware of extended hot showers with lack of bathroom venting outside the home (not into the attic please). Any water intrusion should be addressed immediately with proper drying. If mold growth has begun, remediation must, too. When 'dried' or 'stressed,' mold releases toxins and spores to protect its next gen-



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AONH Founder & President: Sam Abukittah

eration. Homeowners and building insurance should be purchased and reviewed to cover such occurrences.

HVAC systems should be properly sized, designed, and maintained. Make sure your HVAC has free air flow, and proper refrigerant levels should minimize condensation and lower humidity levels. It is wise to have a service contract with inspections every three to six months by a reputable HVAC company to identify and correct deficiencies quickly or before they happen.

A note about dust ~ poorly designed and low-cost vacuum cleaners frequently expel ultrafine particles that accumulate in the home environment. HEPA vacuum cleaners and central vacuum systems, along with good house-keeping and elimination of clutter (particularly boxes and books) go a long way to insure a dust-free home. It is a good idea to keep books behind glass and not accumulating dust. Final reminder ~ dust + paper + humidity = mold = biotoxins. Stop it before it happens.

Step 2 – Harness the Help of Air Cleaners

A full range of air cleaners are available on the market from consumer-grade to medical-grade. While all offer some benefit, some may actually be harmful. Ozone-generating air cleaners should never be operated while people are in the building as ozone is not meant for continuous exposure and may be harmful to eyes, the respiratory system, and brain.

Consumer-grade air cleaners often are very affordable but noisy, limited in effectiveness, and with excessive humidity, can become breeding grounds for mold and bacteria. Also, those making it to the top of Google and reviews may not be the optimal choice. All is not accurate, nor unbiased on the Internet but rather, generated by marketers and PR companies to sway your purchase choices. Purchasing directly from a company that has vetted air cleaning technology and offers consultations for your air quality needs is the best option.

Medical-grade technology, like the

Disinfecting Filtration System® (DFS), creates the purest air. DFS technology was military-funded to protect against biological warfare. It sterilizes/kills pathogens and removes ultrafine particles 40 times smaller than standard HEPA filters.

Air cleaning equipment can be installed directly into your HVAC system (whole home, whole office, whole building) and/or as portable/stand-alone units. Both may be suitable for your needs or constraints. Again, consultation with an air quality professional is invaluable to making the optimal choice.

Step 3 – Use Non-Toxic Products and Building Materials

The innovative American marketplace offers many safe new options for home cleaning products. Likewise, many natural options like white vinegar can be used. Search the Internet for formulas you can create on your own or purchase innovative branded products.

Paints, pesticides, lubricants, etc. should not be stored in the home environment or garage but rather in a storage building away from the home. Garages should be ventilated to prevent accumulation of auto fumes. If the HVAC air-handler is in the garage, be sure all seams are sealed so garage air is not sucked into the home HVAC system. Consider replacing carpets with tile or other less-toxic options. Carpets outgas VOC's and serve as a reservoir for dust and allergens. At the very least, carpets should be steam-cleaned twice per year. Less toxic versions of carpet (i.e. less out-gassing of VOC's) exist as well.

Pure home air is possible and achievable. Eliminating sources of toxins, a well-designed and maintained HVAC system, harnessing medical-grade air cleaning technologies, replacing VOC-emitting products, building materials with less toxic options, and good home hygiene all serve the goal of pure air.

A healthy home starts with pure air and water. In Part Two, we will tackle your home's water source, plumbing system, and steps to pure water.



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Industry asset

Luke Krcil

Luke Krcil, MS, is a 26-year functional medicine and dietary supplement expert, scientist, and former U.S. Army Engineer Officer. He brought himself back from near death in his early 30's using natural and functional medicine, after allopathic medicine left him to die.

His latest landmark is surviving deadly biotoxins from hidden mold in his home. He says, *"You don't have to smell mold for it to be there. And, I didn't truly understand how serious it is until it poisoned me."*

His mission is to transform homes and workplaces from frequent places of harm to places of health and harmony with the launch of Sun Healthy Home four years ago. The company deploys its network of Indoor Environmental Professionals (IEPs), along with powerful practical technologies, in Florida and select cities across the USA. It leads with a single focus: "A Healthy Home Starts with Pure Air and Water."



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