FAQ About Mold

WHAT IS MOLD OR MILDEW?

Mold and mildew are organisms which are naturally present in almost every environment on the planet, including your home and your car. Mold and mildew spores can enter an environment through typical human activities such as walking in and out of a room or wearing a coat outside and then setting that coat down in your bedroom.

Mold is typically dark in color while mildew is lighter in color. Both can grow in warm, moist environments. The weather in Young Harris, Georgia is certainly not as conducive to mold/mildew growth as the warmer and more humid low lying areas of our state and the southeast.

What is my responsibility in preventing growth of mold and mildew?

First, be mindful of the environment you are creating. For example, if your suite’s air conditioner is set at 60 degrees and your door is propped open to 90 degree weather outside, condensation will form in your air vent. As the warm air from outside comes in through the propped door, mold spores enter your room and begin to collect on the moisture and begin to grow. This creates the perception that mold is coming out of your air vent when really it is coming in from the outside.

Additionally, steam from showers can create a moist environment. After your shower, pull the curtain closed so it can dry. Keep the door to your bathroom open after you shower so moisture can dissipate.

Regular cleaning is important to remove the naturally occurring mold spores. You should wipe down hard surfaces (i.e. counters, shelves, toilets, mirrors, showers, tile floors) once a week using a common household cleaner or a mixture of water and white vinegar for a "greener" option. Vacuum carpets often and wash both bed linens and window treatments regularly.

What if I think I have mold or mildew in my room?

If you are concerned about mold or mildew in your room or if you believe your air handling system is malfunctioning, please contact the residence life staff immediately.

What is YHC doing about Mold and Mildew?

YHC staff are always concerned about the living conditions in the residence halls. YHC lessens the risk of mold and mildew in the following ways:
• Air filters in heating/cooling units are changed once per month
• Air handling units are cleaned twice per year (August and December)
• An antimicrobial solution is placed in drip pans of all air handling units
• Any mold remediation occurs within the recommended guidelines of both the CDC and EPA
• Common areas and common bathrooms are cleaned several times per week
• Most rooms are painted each summer
• Staff responds quickly to concerns about mold or mildew

In 2003, Healthy Buildings International conducted a thorough examination of all the residence Halls in operation at that time. The study found satisfactory air quality conditions in all buildings and recommended regular maintenance (listed above) to manage the naturally occurring mold spores.

What if I think I am sick from mold or mildew?

Some people are more sensitive to mold than others. If you are feeling ill, you should immediately see a health care professional and alert residence life staff. Our campus nurse is available each weekday from 8:30 to 4:30.

More information can be found on the website for The Centers for Disease Control at www.cdc.gov/mold/faqs.htm.