



ENVIRONMENTAL ACQUIRED ILLNESS

IS YOUR HOME TOXIC?

Environmental Acquired Illness

IS YOUR HOME TOXIC?

This is a basic guide to help you navigate the process of determining if your home is toxic with mold and mycotoxins and to determine if you are someone who is genetically susceptible to becoming sick from the common toxins that lead to Environmental Acquired Illness. Awareness is the first step to change, followed by the right information and education so that you can make the right decisions going forward.

Environmental Acquired Illness (EAI), including Biotoxin Illness encompasses a myriad of diagnoses, disease processes, and symptoms. EAI's include:

- Chronic inflammatory response syndrome (CIRS) (also called mold illness or biotoxin illness),
- Persistent Lyme disease and other infections caused by Bartonella, Babesia, Epstein-Barr virus (EBV), mycoplasma and others,
- Mast cell activation syndrome (MCAS),
- Multiple chemical sensitivity (MCS), among many others.

Biotoxin Illness Symptom Clusters		
Fatigue	Difficulty Concentrating	Red Eyes Blurred Vision
Weak Decreased Assimilation of New Knowledge Aches Headache Light Sensitivity	Unusual Skin Sensitivity Tingling	Night Sweats Mood Swings Ice-Pick Pain
Memory Impairment Decreased Word Finding	Shortness of Breath Sinus Congestion	Abdominal Pain Diarrhea Numbness
Joint Pain A.M. Stiffness Cramps	Cough Excessive Thirst Confusion	Tearing of Eyes Disorientation Metallic Taste
	Appetite Swings Difficulty Regulating Body Temperature Increased Urinary Frequency	Static Shocks Vertigo

Photo Credit: Richmond Integrative and Functional Medicine

For simplicity sake, the focus will be the mold and mycotoxins in the home and Biotoxin Illness. Environmental Acquired Illness looks like many other illnesses, with overlapping symptoms to other disease states, and is often the reason why someone seeks medical care.

The biggest obstacles facing patients today are lack of awareness, knowledge, and misinformation. Many doctors/health care providers do not know that the triggering toxin is coming from the home/building, or they fail to look at the home in the patient assessment using the proper testing.

How many doctors and practitioners are asking about the quality of your indoor environment, concerned about the 1 hour commute in your toxic car, or about the quality of food you are consuming? When there is a decline in one's health, or an unrelenting illness that does not improve with intervention, the home environment should be evaluated for the hidden, triggering toxins.

The initial toxins to look for in a home are Mold, Mycotoxins, and Microbial VOC's. Beyond that, many can be triggered by VOC's, Radon, Lead, EMF's and LED lighting.

Homes and buildings can be built under conditions that are wet and moldy, or they are built too tight, or with poor craftsmanship. Moldy materials, previous water-damage and/or poor build ethics are common issues, and often these issues are hidden and/or concealed. Although, hidden or concealed, the invisible toxins are still present, which breath into the home/building impacting the health of those inside.

The mold spores from a water-damaged building can produce mycotoxins and microbial volatile organic compounds (mVOCs) triggering Cell Danger Response (CDR.) These toxins are for the most part, invisible, so performing the correct testing on the home is imperative to capture, identify and quantify the toxins upon testing. Air testing is often recommended and performed on a building however it is far too limited to capture the heavy and sticky toxins which are rarely floating around in the air. Air testing is commonly why so many homes are not identified as toxic.

Read more on the effects of living in a water-damaged building:

<http://toxicology.usu.edu/endnote/0522008002.pdf>

Current research states...

24% of society have the genetic haplotype HLA-DR for mold and biotoxin illness. This genetic haplotype makes one vulnerable to illness as their body is unable to recognize toxins as a foreign invader, and lacking to produce the antibodies needed to remove mycotoxins.

Those with HLA-DR are more likely to develop Chronic Inflammatory Response Syndrome (CIRS), and a systemic inflammatory response to mold toxins.



HiTech USA
AIR SOLUTIONS



With CIRS, patients experience a cascade of inflammatory and hormonal changes that result in symptoms such as fatigue, pain, gastrointestinal and neurologic symptoms, sleep disturbances, and more. Toxins accumulate in the body, leading to toxin overload, nutrient deficiency, systemic inflammatory cytokine storms, immune suppression with mitochondrial and cellular damage.

There is an underlying mechanism called Cell Danger Response (CDR) that is triggered in the body when exposed. You can read more about Dr. Robert Naviaux's research on CDR [here](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1567724913002390).

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1567724913002390>



DO YOU HAVE THE HLA-DR GENETIC HAPLOTYPE THAT MAKES YOU MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO ENVIRONMENTAL ACQUIRED TOXICITY?

At least 24% of the population has this genetic predisposition to becoming poisoned from mold and mycotoxins. Moreover, carriers of the HLA-DR gene are more susceptible to other chronic diseases, including:

- Autoimmune Diseases (MS, Lupus, Sjogren's, Rheumatoid, Hashimoto's, etc)
- Alzheimer's Disease
- Parkinson's Disease
- Heart Diseases
- Gastrointestinal issues
- Cancer
- Allergy/Asthma
- Celiac
- Chemical Sensitivity
- Mast Cell
- POTS

Having HLA-DR for mold/biotoxin illness is not a death sentence since there are ways to counter the toxic exposure and to support the body while you address your home.

You can order your HLA-DR test at Life Extension Labs here:

<https://www.lifeextension.com/lab-testing/itemlc100087/hla-dr-mold-genetic-test>



EAI and mold illness is plaguing so many and the challenge is that symptoms can look like other conditions leading to a mis-diagnosis or not treating the root cause. Awareness about the home environment is the first step, followed by having the proper information for the long-term solution.

Moving, remediation, tossing of belongings are all a short-term solutions...until the next water leak, or you discover the hidden water damage, or a remediation worker breaks your barrier, or they fail to implement proper barriers and measures to prevent increased levels of contamination during the remediation or your moldy friend comes over and cross-contaminates the home.

In the indoor environment industry, much of the focus is on air purification, not on surfaces. Traditional technology does not address the sticky and heavy contaminants that are lingering on surfaces and not just in the air, nor do they destroy and reduce when it comes to mold and mycotoxins on surfaces.

HiTech Air Reactors destroy mold and mycotoxins on both the surfaces and air, allowing for the highest level of decontamination in a home/building as well as addressing the ongoing cross-contamination issues that can keep many in cell danger response and systemic, metabolic dysregulation.

You can learn more about HiTech Air Reactors here:
www.hitechairsolutionsusa.com

Meet Christine

For myself, I had no idea the impact that a water-damaged building could have on my health. Every day, for 8-10 hours, I worked in a building with water-stained ceiling tiles, water-damaged carpet and building material. My body was absorbing and inhaling invisible toxins causing systemic inflammation and cellular damage.

The fatigue, brain fog, head pressure, muscle aches, constipation, skin rashes, diminished vision, poor cognition, memory loss were all symptoms I experienced from working in a water-damaged building. This forced me to quit my job because I could not ethically work as a clinician given my compromised cognition, and lack of physical stamina.



My first diagnosis was Breast cancer (2013), followed by Lyme disease and high viral load (2014), and Autoimmune Hashimoto (2014) and increasing Neurological symptoms which they said was Lyme-related in 2015-16. For 3 years, I chased those diagnoses and paid lots of money seeing a number of specialists/natural healers and therapists.

My health continued to decline despite expensive IV treatments, supplements and various therapies. I was increasingly non-functional, spending most of my days horizontal, sleeping or listening to educational and inspirational podcasts. My body was weak, fatigued, and I struggled with brain fog and loss of any interest in socializing due to difficulty with words, and formulating sentences.

Finally, in late 2016, I learned about Sick Building Syndrome, Chronic Inflammatory Response Syndrome, and Mold Illness on a podcast. The speaker described a clinical scenario and I was able to connect the dots that everything I was experiencing was from exposure to a water-damaged building.

Sure enough, upon testing my home, I found that I had high levels of mycotoxins and mold spores in my home and in my HVAC system. In September 2016, I started decontaminating my home using the HiTech Air Reactor.

In a matter of weeks, I experienced a physiological shift; my brain was clearer, I had more energy to shower daily, to walk, and grocery shop. I had an interest to socialize and not be a recluse, and my sluggish organs started working again. In late October, I started Ballroom dancing. By the end of 2016, I was living life again, dancing, socializing, traveling and caring for my needs.

My passion for HiTech Air came out of darkness, deep-suffering and despair. For years, I was chasing symptoms, focused on the body and was unaware that my home, work, and car environments kept triggering me into cell danger response, and were keeping me sick.

I was essentially told that I would not be able to live a normal life again, and that parting with my possessions and keepsakes would be necessary. That living in a tent in a remote area or outside my home would be required for my body to recover.

HiTech Air technology allowed me to live and recover in my home and changed my paradigm of recovery to get my life back and live normal again. This single investment into my home was life-changing and turned my home from a toxic trigger to a safe, non-triggering and healing space.

You can learn more about HiTech Air Reactors here:

www.hitechairsolutionsusa.com



HOW TO PROPERLY TEST THE HOME

THE ERMI TEST by Mycometrics.com

In testing the home, the test that I have found to be most helpful in identifying mold spores and mycotoxins within a building, and any hidden issues of negative pressure or hidden leaks is the Environmental Relative Mold Index (ERMI). There are other tests, but the ERMI is a good starting point.

ERMI dust acu-cloth testing is preferred. Old dust of 3 weeks or more. 6 weeks is ideal. The older the dust, the better, mixed with some newer dust. I was trained to “oversample” the cloth, and to sample dust from every room in the house with the same cloth on the rough side of the cloth.

Collect dust from light fixtures, ceiling fan blades, picture frames, baseboards behind furniture or top shelf areas that collect dust. Run your HVAC for 3 days prior to ERMI testing to capture contaminants in the HVAC and ducts.

When collecting your sample, AVOID the inhibitors such as grease, active mold growth and floors that have been walked on.

Order your Acu-Cloth dust kit from Mycometrics.com here:

<https://www.mycometrics.com/online.html>

References

1. <http://www.survivingmold.com/diagnosis/lab-tests> Accessed March 2015
2. <http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/index.htm> Accessed March 2015

Let's get started...

BE NATURALLY WELL



Schedule a complimentary consultation

- Health begins in a non-toxic home. [Click here to schedule a complimentary 15 minute consultation](#) with Christine Knapp-Phillips RN, MSN, FNP, CBT to get moving in the right direction.



Test your home

- [Click here to order your Acu-Cloth dust kit from Mycometrics.com.](#)



Test your body

- [Click here to order your HLA-DR test from Life Extension Labs.](#)



Let's get started...

Recovery from EAI requires addressing your home, supporting the body at a foundational level and fostering the right mindset. Let's get started by looking at your home.



Christine Knapp-Phillips

RN, MSN, FNP, CBT

Phone: 949-697-3152

Email: christine@benaturallywell.net

Website: www.benaturallywell.net