



The Oklahoma Home Mold & Testing Guide

How to find out if your house is making you sick

A patient guide from Dr. Alvin P.

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Could mold be the missing piece?

You've been sick for a while. The symptoms don't fit neatly into one box — fatigue, brain fog, headaches, strange sensitivities, maybe anxiety or air hunger. You've seen doctors. Your labs keep coming back "normal." And somewhere, someone mentioned mold — or you found it yourself at 2am, reading and wondering if your own house could be part of the problem.

In Oklahoma, that question deserves a serious look. Our humidity, spring flooding, storm damage, and aging HVAC systems make hidden moisture and mold far more common than most people — and most doctors — realize. Yet a home mold exposure is almost never part of a standard medical workup.

This guide explains how mold affects the body, how MCAS fits in, and — most usefully — how to actually test both your home and your body so you can stop guessing. It's educational, not medical advice, but it will help you ask much better questions.

How mold makes people sick

"Mold illness" isn't one thing. There are two distinct ways mold harms health, and telling them apart matters because they're tested and managed differently.

1. Mold allergy (an IgE immune response)

Some people's immune systems react to mold spores the way others react to pollen — producing IgE antibodies that drive classic allergy symptoms: congestion, sneezing, itchy eyes, asthma flares. This is measurable with allergy testing.

2. Mycotoxin illness / CIRS (a toxic and inflammatory response)

Certain molds also produce mycotoxins — toxic compounds that can trigger a body-wide inflammatory response in susceptible people. This is what's often called CIRS (Chronic Inflammatory Response Syndrome). It's not an allergy; it's a broader inflammatory and immune disturbance, and it drives the multi-system, hard-to-pin-down symptoms many mold patients live with. Genetics play a role in who can clear these toxins and who can't — which is why one family member can be floored while others in the same house feel fine.

Two problems, two kinds of testing

A mold allergy and mycotoxin/CIRS illness are different processes. You can have one, the other, or both. That's why a single test rarely tells the whole story — and why we look at both your body's reaction AND your environment.

The symptom map

Mold-related illness is a multi-system illness. See how many of these you recognize — the breadth itself is a clue.

System	Common symptoms
Neurological	Brain fog, memory and word-finding trouble, headaches, dizziness, poor concentration, anxiety, insomnia
Energy	Deep fatigue, unrefreshing sleep, exercise intolerance

System	Common symptoms
Respiratory	Congestion, cough, sinus problems, air hunger, asthma-like symptoms
Immune / reactivity	New sensitivities to foods, smells, chemicals; hives, flushing, itching; frequent infections
Gut	Nausea, bloating, appetite changes, new food intolerances
Body	Muscle aches, joint pain, tremor, temperature dysregulation, tingling
Eyes / other	Light sensitivity, blurred vision, metallic taste, static “shocks,” excessive thirst

The mold–MCAS connection

If your reactions have been getting broader — suddenly you react to foods you used to tolerate, to wine, to strong smells, to heat, to stress — mast cell activation may be part of your picture, and mold is one of its most common hidden triggers.

Mast cells are immune cells that release histamine and other chemicals to defend the body. In Mast Cell Activation Syndrome (MCAS), they become hair-trigger, firing at things that shouldn't provoke them. Mold and mycotoxins are potent mast cell activators. The result is a histamine “bucket” that overflows: flushing, hives, itching, headaches, gut upset, racing heart, and reactions that seem to change day to day.

- **Why standard allergy testing misses it:** MCAS isn't a classic allergy, so skin-prick and standard IgE tests often come back clean even while you're clearly reacting to everything.
- **Why it matters:** if mold is driving your mast cells, calming the mast cells without addressing the mold exposure is like bailing a boat without patching the hole.

Testing your body: what we use

At Venturis, we don't guess. We look at how your body is responding to mold from more than one angle. Depending on your picture, that can include:

Mold allergy and immune testing (US BioTek)

We use US BioTek mold testing to assess your immune response to common molds — including a mold-specific IgE panel that measures whether your body is producing allergic antibodies to the molds people are most often exposed to. This helps separate a true allergic component from the broader inflammatory picture, and it guides what we do next.

In-clinic culturing for mold, fungal, and Candida overgrowth

Beyond environmental exposure, mold and fungal organisms — including Candida — can colonize and overgrow in the body, especially after antibiotics, illness, or ongoing exposure. In our clinic we culture for mold, fungal, and Candida overgrowth so we can see what's actually growing rather than inferring it. This is a piece most conventional workups skip entirely.

Supporting labs

Depending on your case, we may look at inflammatory markers, immune function, nutrient status, and markers relevant to CIRS, building a picture of how deeply mold is affecting your system — not just whether you were exposed.

Body testing vs. home testing — you need both

Body testing tells us how you're reacting. Home testing tells us what you're reacting TO. Fixing your health without fixing your environment rarely holds — and testing your body while ignoring an ongoing exposure means you keep refilling the bucket. That's why the next section matters as much as this one.

Testing your home: a plain-English guide

This is where most people feel lost, so here's how the common options actually compare. The goal is to find hidden moisture and the specific molds that matter for health.

The options, compared

Method	What it is & when it helps
Visual + moisture inspection	A qualified inspector looks for water damage, checks humidity, and uses moisture meters. Always the first step — mold follows moisture, so finding the water source is half the battle.
ERMI	A dust sample analyzed for 36 mold species by DNA. Gives a broad picture of the mold “history” in a home. Useful for a fuller assessment, especially for health-focused cases.
HERTSMI-2	A shorter, cheaper score based on 5 of the most health-relevant molds. Often used to re-check a home or decide if a space is “safe enough” for a sensitive person.
Air (spore trap) sampling	Captures airborne spores at a moment in time. Can confirm an active airborne problem but can miss hidden mold and only reflects that day.
Petri-dish “settle” kits	The cheap hardware-store plates. Mold grows on almost any plate because spores are everywhere — they produce alarming results with little real meaning. We don't recommend relying on them.

If you do just one thing

Start with a moisture inspection. Mold is a symptom of a water problem. Find and fix the moisture, and you address the root — testing tells you how bad it is and whether remediation worked.

Oklahoma-specific hot spots to check

- Under sinks, around water heaters, and anywhere there's been a slow leak.
- Crawl spaces and slab edges after our spring rains and flooding.
- HVAC systems and ductwork — a major mold reservoir in humid climates; a musty smell when the AC kicks on is a red flag.
- Bathrooms and laundry areas with poor ventilation.
- Anywhere storm damage let water in — even if it “dried out.” Roof and window leaks are classic hidden sources.
- Basements and closets against exterior walls, where humidity condenses.

What to do if you find mold

Don't panic, and don't rip into walls yourself — disturbing mold without containment can flood your air with spores and make things much worse, especially if you're sensitive.

1. Fix the moisture source first. Remediation without stopping the water is temporary.
2. Use a qualified remediation professional for anything beyond a small surface area, with proper containment.
3. Reduce exposure meanwhile: run a quality HEPA air filter, control humidity (aim for 40–50%), and if a room is clearly affected, minimize time there.
4. Re-test after remediation (a HERTSMI-2 or ERMI) to confirm it worked — this step is skipped far too often.
5. Support your body's recovery with a provider who understands mold illness, so healing and environmental cleanup happen together.

How we approach mold illness at Venturis

Our approach rests on one principle: you can't out-treat an ongoing exposure, and you can't clean your way to health without also helping the body recover. So we work both sides.

- A thorough history built around your timeline, your home, and every system involved.
- US BioTek mold testing to assess your immune and allergic response.
- In-clinic culturing for mold, fungal, and Candida overgrowth — seeing what's actually growing.
- Attention to the overlaps — MCAS, histamine issues, gut health, and post-viral illness — that so often travel with mold.
- A staged, tolerable plan that supports your body's ability to clear toxins as you reduce exposure at home.

Your next step

If your home and your health both point toward mold, guessing is the most expensive path — in money and in lost time. Testing turns a frightening unknown into a plan.

Talk with us

Book a complimentary phone consultation — a short, no-pressure conversation about your symptoms, your home, and whether our testing and approach are a fit for you.



Call or text: 405-848-7246



Book online: calendly.com/venturisclinic/venturis-new-patient-pre-consult



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Join our free Oklahoma community: “Oklahoma Mold Illness, CIRS & MCAS Support” on Facebook, where Dr. Alvin shares research, testing guidance, and answers questions.

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