



# Preventing and treating damp and mould in your home



**At St Mungo's, we are committed to providing you with a safe and healthy environment that supports your wellbeing. This information is designed to help you prevent condensation, damp and mould in your home and to ensure you know how to raise any issues related to damp and mould with us.**

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## What is mould?

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Mould is a fungus that forms in damp and poorly ventilated areas. It can cause serious health issues such as respiratory infections, allergies or asthma. Damp and mould can also affect your immune system.

Any home can be affected by damp and mould. Moisture from ordinary household activities such as cooking, washing and drying clothes can cause these problems, but there are things you can do to help stop it happening.



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## How do mould and damp start?

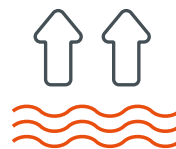
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The most common cause of mould is condensation, which is caused by excess moisture. If the air gets colder, it can't hold as much moisture and tiny drops appear on cold surfaces, such as windows. Condensation can also occur in areas where there is less air movement, such as behind cupboards or in wardrobes. This can lead to black spotted mould growth.

As well as condensation, damp can also be caused by leaking pipes or overflows, rain seeping through the roof where a tile or slate is missing, blocked guttering or cracked or loose rainwater pipes, or rising damp due to a defective damp proof course (which will create a yellow "tide mark" on internal walls).

**Unresolved leaks can lead to mould appearing in your home and can lead to severe damage.**

If you see signs of a leak, please tell us as soon as possible on [repairs@mungos.org](mailto:repairs@mungos.org) so that we can investigate and seek to fix swiftly.



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## Take extra care in winter

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As condensation occurs when the air is colder, it's especially important to take precautions in the winter. The best way to avoid condensation is to keep rooms as warm as possible. Use your thermostatically controlled radiator valves (where fitted) to control the heating in each room to help reduce heating costs and aim to set the heating in your home to between 18C – 21C. Where possible, always keep the heating on a low setting so your home doesn't get too cold.

Loft and cavity wall insulation will help keep your home warmer and reduce fuel bills. If you feel that your loft or cavity walls are not insulated sufficiently, please contact us.



## Tips for preventing condensation

- ▶ When cooking, reduce the amount of moisture in the air by covering pans and not letting kettles continuously boil.



- ▶ Create ventilation in the kitchen and bathroom when cooking, washing up, bathing and drying clothes by opening windows wider or switching the fan on. Leave windows open or fans on for 20 minutes afterwards.
- ▶ Keep kitchen and bathroom doors closed when cooking and bathing to stop condensation spreading to other rooms.
- ▶ If you do not have a fan in your kitchen or bathroom or think it is defective, report this to us on [repairs@mungos.org](mailto:repairs@mungos.org) and request that a replacement is fitted.
- ▶ Put washing outdoors to dry if you can. If you have a tumble dryer, make sure that it is vented outside (unless it is a condensing type).

- ▶ If your only option is to dry clothes inside, put them in the bathroom with the door closed and the window open, or with the extractor fan on. Try not to use radiators to dry clothes as it stops radiators working properly and can lead to a cold home.

- ▶ Keep windows ajar or trickle vents open wherever possible.
- ▶ Don't cover air bricks and ventilation holes in your property; these help circulate air and reduce condensation.
- ▶ Open cupboard and wardrobe doors to ventilate them and leave space between the back of wardrobes and the wall.
- ▶ Where possible, place any furniture against internal walls rather than outside walls.
- ▶ Moisture, dust and fluff or debris will help mould grow; cleaning your home regularly will reduce the chances of mould.



## Tips for managing condensation

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- If you see mould growing, clean it with an anti mould cleaner (available in most supermarkets) as soon as possible to stop it from spreading.
- Every day, wipe down surfaces where condensation forms or moisture settles, such as windowsills, as this will prevent mould growth.
- Use a squeegee to wipe down any excess moisture in the bathroom after every shower or bath.
- Thoroughly wash mildewed clothes and carpets. Brushing or hoovering mould can disturb the particles and increase the risk of breathing problems.

## Do you need more help?

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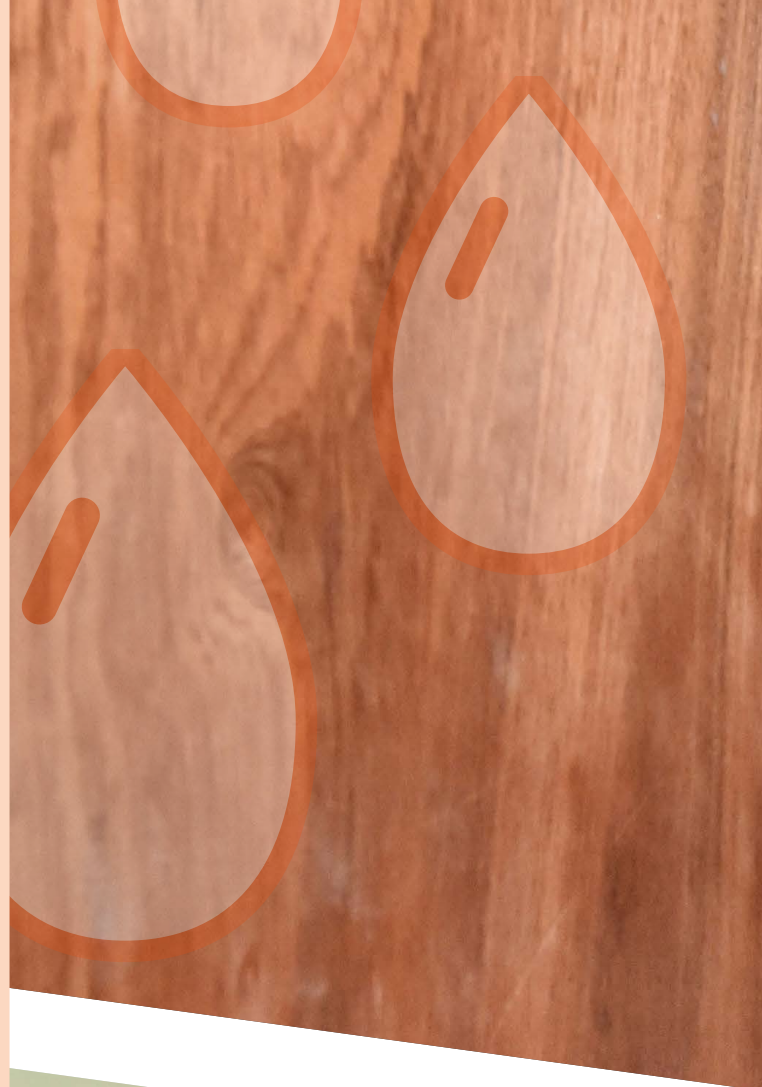
The advice in this flyer can help avoid condensation in your home, but we do realise that not all damp and mould issues can be tackled by residents.

If you have a problem with condensation or mould in your home that you cannot manage, you can report it to us on

**[repairs@mungos.org](mailto:repairs@mungos.org)**.

A warm home can reduce condensation. If you have concerns about heating your home, you can find help and advice by contacting Citizens' Advice

– **[www.citizensadvice.org.uk](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk)**.



**[www.mungos.org/clients](http://www.mungos.org/clients)**

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