Introduction to Mold and the Podcast Guest

New construction doesn't breathe like the old older homes do. And then of course, uh, of course Florida where I'm at, there's, there's a lot of new construction going on and they come in with all these engineered trusses and all this lumber.

They dump them at the side of the house, let them set for a few weeks and it's moldy and it's, it's wet, it's humid. And then they turn around and put that inside the homes.

And so a lot of new construction has, again, most of our business is new construction, which surprises a lot of people. Welcome back to the Integrative Health podcast with Dr.

Jenn. Today, we are going to be talking about a hidden environmental toxin in your home, so you definitely want to stay and listen. I would also love it if you left a review on any platform you listen to so these episodes can reach and impact other people's health.

So today, we're going to be talking to John Bodie. He's the founder of Mold Pros. This is a nationwide leader in mold inspection testing and remediation with over 15 years of experience.

His company stands out for its science-driven approach, integration with medical providers, and patent and process for both removing mold and mold toxins.

Mold Pros is committed to helping families safeguard their homes and health, especially those dealing with mold-related illnesses like sears. So welcome, John.

So excited to dive in deep to mold today. Thanks for having me. Glad to be on. Yes, of course. Now, what's interesting about getting to know you is this wasn't really like the path you and your wife were going to do, right, in life.

Like, tell us about how you got into mold remediation. Yeah, you bet. So no, our background actually was financial services, both of ours.

How Mold Pros Began and Why Remediation Matters

And so working for Fortune 500 companies, we, when the mortgage crisis happened in 2007, 2009, we started buying up homes, foreclosed homes, and those homes have mold issues typically.

And so what happened is that we started doing research on a better way to remediate without using all these harmful chemicals and that kind of thing. Well, long story short, we partnered with a company in Florida.

We kind of outgrew them about the first year and then worked to develop our own process, our own product using enzymes and botanicals, more of a nature versus nature approach.

So that's kind of what took us down that path. Yeah, and that's pretty amazing because it's so important that people buying these foreclosed homes that or even flips that we see on the popular renovation shows that they actually remediate the mold and not just like pour bleach on it and then, you know, put lipstick on a pig because that's pretty scary.

And unfortunately, it's fairly standard. And the EPA says that even dead mold has health concerns. And so coming in using a biocide, or even if you use something that's a little less caustic like thieves oil or hydrogen peroxide, something along those, it's still dead mold.

And so that's why we believe firmly that an enzymatic approach, which actually kind of rapidly biodegrades is so much better. You just don't know what you're stepping into in some of these flipped homes that have not been remediated properly for sure.

Right. Now, what are some of the most common symptoms that people experience when mold is making them sick? Because a lot of the times doctors miss these, or they miss diagnosis and put them on a medication.

Yeah. You see a lot of, um, one of the things that we hear oftentimes is, you know, I was in the house, wasn't feeling great, went away on vacation or went to go see, especially this time of year, went to go see the family, fell great, came back, not feeling well again.

So that's kind of one of the telltale signs. Uh, but there can also be a lot of our work from practitioners, just like yourself, where you'll run clinical data on someone, uh, say like a urine micro toxin test.

And you have validated that they have. these exposures to mold or mold toxins. So then it becomes, okay, where did that come from? And so a lot of clinicians will refer their patients to us to go do that more in-depth analysis of someone's home.

Yeah, and that is so important to first be removed from the mycotoxins. And the other problem though that happens so much is I'll be like, okay, this patient has illness related with mycotoxins.

I am pretty sure they're having a current mold exposure because it's not getting better with treatment even though they deny that they have mold. And even sometimes they have an inspector go.

and look at their house, but they're not really trained to look for this. So, I mean, what are these like blind spots in this industry that really homeowners are kind of stuck because they're not working with the right people?

Yeah, that's a great question. I think, and you've probably seen this a lot with your experience and dealing with environmental illness is that A lot of assessors or inspectors, most states don't have licensure, so anybody can be one if they say they are a mold assessor.

Symptoms, Misdiagnosis, and Common Testing Blind Spots

They're not properly trained. They're not aware of environmental illness. They do very basic, we call them pump jockeys, where they come and just grab an aerosample and leave.

And that can be some good data, but it's oftentimes just not enough to give a real picture. So when we come in, one of the blind spots to answer your question directly, is, okay, overall standardized mold testing, do we have elevations when compared to the exterior baseline?

Okay. So that's basic. But do we have toxigenic or pathogenic species? And are they actually producing toxins? And then a lot of inspectors don't take the time to actually inspect.

You know, they would visually and olfactory and smell and pull things off from underneath the kitchen sink and go into the crawl space and look and see if there's suspected microbial growth of the joist.

They just don't. Uh, they're in and out and they just don't understand what, what's there. Yeah, yeah, it's really kind of scary. And, you know, we've had issues with one of the preschools that one of my sons went to and I mean, it smelled musty when you walked in and they had, you know, the year before the basement flooded, it was at a, you know, an old church and And I'm like, hey, this is a problem, and people are getting sick from this.

And what did they do? Someone just grabbed some plates and just put them certain places. And I was like, no, it's not a problem. And I'm like, you can smell it.

It's a problem. You can smell it. So that really drives me bananas because there is no standard. And because there

is no standardization, people continue to live in sickness.

And I know that's why you're so passionate with your company and getting the word out there. Yeah, you know those auger, but that's a whole nother episode and those have really gained in popularity recently because they're quick and they're easy, right, but they're also They're not Quantitative how much airflow passed over them also not all molds are airborne molds like stachybotryx is it's bred by water insects and rodents And so it's not going to make its way up in culture.

Well in that auger plate. So yeah, there's a A really good approach that we'd recommend the listeners take is find an assessor that certainly has environmental illness experience that's referred maybe by a healthcare provider such as yourself, but also does layered approaches to investigation and sampling.

So they'll take multiple types of sample to really get a holistic view of the property and not just be one of those pump jockeys that come in and just take those air samples.

Right. No, I mean, what do you think? So say someone, maybe they can't afford or they don't have someone that does visual inspection around them and they're not in IEP.

What about doing an ERMI test? What are the positives and negatives for that? Yeah. So an ERMI test, love polymerase chain reaction. It says, You know, it's as sensitive as it gets from a analytical method, but it does, as with any test, it has some blind spots.

And so a couple of those are the army test was developed based on the healthy home study of 1096 homes where they vacuumed a three by six in the living room and in the bedroom.

And they said, okay, these are the molds that are in group one. That's a, a water damage home. And then these are the ones that's in group two. And these are molds that are found in, you know, a healthy home, so to speak.

Well. We've seen you can, you can get to zero, which is great by being either hospital room clean, which is fantastic, or be really moldy in group two, uh, since they subtract that group two score out.

So that's a problem. The other thing is you're in Tennessee and I'm in Florida and right now what's moldy in Florida or the natural fungal ecology in Florida in January is much different than in rainy season in, uh, in July.

or we have offices in Arizona and Oregon, and that's a much different climate as well. So to say that, hey, here's an average acceptable moldiness, probably isn't accurate.

Directly, it can be helpful, but it's not a test that, in fact, I'm a member of ICI, the International Society of Environment-Equired Illness, a founding member, and they've come out with a paper that said, hey, we don't recommend the army for diagnosing at home.

And the EPA says much the same way. It's good analytical methodology. It's not the only test that someone should run if they're going to run tests. Yeah.

So what would you suggest if someone couldn't get someone to visually inspect? Yeah. So first of all, make a phone call. There's going to be good inspectors.

You may have to pay to have someone mobilize and get there. But generally, there's going to be a qualified inspector. And we have some resources on our website as well that can help people out with that.

we have an inspector network, but I would encourage, you know, as a practitioner, the road to wellness can be a long journey. I would always recommend people make data-driven decisions.

So spend, if it's a little extra money, spend that extra money to get good data because you don't want to go down that long journey without having facts.

And you surely don't want to go down that journey having bad facts by just having a cheap pump jockey come in and grab those air samples and say, no, you're good when you're not.

Yeah, it's really, really hard too.

ERMI Testing and Choosing a Qualified Inspector

I've had so many patients that they're like, you know, we've just got the ERMI because they wouldn't go and go through like a mold inspector that knew what they were doing.

They didn't want to spend that. And then we're just chasing our tail because I know it's the problem and we see it's the problem, but we can't find it.

It was really interesting though. It's so hard. Like it's so hard to find it. I mean, we had, I had a patient that they had a good mold inspector come through their house and they were renovating.

And she was just like, told the construction company there. She's like, Hey, I just want you to tear that window down to the drywall in the master bedroom.

And there was mold. And, you know, so I guess like, you know, it comes with experience. It comes with gestalt. I mean, where are the places that, you know, that even really good IEPs miss sometimes, I guess, because it has to happen, right?

Like, that's how you learn because you miss it. So what have been those places? Yeah. So, um, we have some, some arrows in our quiver to help out. Like when we go assessment, we're going to use infrared thermography, which tells us temperature.

So maybe if we have an area that's, that's wet behind drywall, you can certainly identify that thermal anomaly and then measure the moisture in the, in the, in, uh, on that drywall.

There's also some tools like intracavity samples. So if, and that gets back to that visual inspection. So if there is a, say like a flashing leak underneath the window, but it may be dry today, but if there's cracks or drywall popping, then that's a place where we'd say, okay, let's do an intracavity sample, which is about the size of a pencil.

You make a hole and then you see what's going on inside there without unnecessarily removing all the dry So what does flashing mean? Can you explain that to our audience?

Yeah. So whenever they build a home and they put in these windows, you want to keep moisture out. And so they'll put flashing on the sides. That way rain doesn't come in and penetrate the envelope of the home.

So it's just proper insulation, skylights, chimneys, all of those windows, all of them have flashing that sometimes can fail. Yeah. And more windows, more problems, right?

Well, but seriously, because I'm like, oh, there could be mold there. And what we're seeing a lot is, well, what I'm seeing in the little cases that I have compared to you is that these homes, they're skimping on the flashing.

They're not done properly. I had a patient that had a $10,000 remediation quote because they had to replace every single window because the construction builder, they slacked on it.

And you're not going to notice it until it's It's bad. So I mean, gosh, like these new homes, especially in Tennessee, I feel like there's so much mold because they're just going up.

And unless you work with a company that is like mold literate or like really cares, you really have to be careful. And like, it's it's hard, right? It is.

Everybody thinks that we do work on old moldy buildings and most of our work is newer construction. There's a couple of reasons for that. Back in the energy crisis, they changed the airflow requirements, and we started wrapping homes in Tyvek to make more, you know, that plastic that's out there, to make it more energy efficient.

And they are. New construction doesn't breathe like the older homes do. And then, of course, Florida, where I'm at, there's a lot of new construction going on.

And they come in with all these engineered trusses and all this lumber, they dump them at the side of the house. Let them set for a few weeks and it's moldy and it's wet, it's humid.

And then they try and put that inside the homes.

New Construction, Moisture, and Hidden Mold Risks

And so a lot of new construction has, again, most of our business is new construction, which surprises a lot of people. Yeah, it's crazy. I want to like bring back plaster.

Like when we bring back plaster, because it's basically like cement and it's not going to get moldy. So my old brick and mortar office was so like sensitive, chemical sensitive friendly for my patients because it was plaster.

So it was really cool because it was an old building, but I wasn't worried about it being moldy. This is a quick sidebar story. So we were actually, which, You know, God knew the plans, we were going to move into this different building that was bigger and I took my office front desk staff through it.

And I was so excited about it. We walk in and there was water leaking from the second floor because something happened with the air conditioning. There was water everywhere.

And we called them and we're like, hey, just so you know, the building, like there's water leaking. It's a disaster. And they're like, oh, we'll get that cleaned up.

Like, it will be fine. And my husband's like, they'll say they'll clean it all up. Like, it will be fine. And I'm like, no, unless they have the remediator that I want to come in.

Even then, like, it was such a bad flood because no one was in there. So who knows how many days? I'm like, it will, my patients that are chemically sensitive, like, or have had mold illness, they'll like, they would not feel safe during their appointments.

But anyway, that brings me to a good point. What should people be asking if they're buying or looking at a new home? First, they should get a mold inspection before they sign on the dotted line, but especially in Florida, all those floods, flooding, scary.

And we do work, so we have eight locations nationwide, all the way to the Pacific Northwest, the Midwest, et cetera. So everywhere we recommend someone get a qualified mold test.

And if you're already, and I'm sure you've seen this, a lot of your patients become the canary in the coal mine, right? So they can, it's hypersensitive because they've had prior exposures.

And so if they've tested positive, say clinically for mycotoxins, and this is an important bit of information, Get environmental mycotoxin testing. Now, typically you may only have 10 days to get your inspections done.

And so when you're writing that contract, you may have to write that, okay, regular inspections within 10 days, environmental mycotoxin testing is going to take generally two weeks to get the answers back, the results back.

just like a clinical does. And so write that in, have your agent write that into the contract. That way you're not stepping into a home that's filled with mold toxins that could impact your health, right?

And mold tests, you get back pretty quick, but if you've had a mold issue in the past and had the mold removed, but never addressed the environmental toxins, they can still be there.

Can you explain what you mean by that, that you've had the mold remediated but haven't addressed the environmental toxins? Yeah. Yeah. So there's a common misperception that if you get rid of the mold, you get rid of the toxins.

Well, obviously if the mold's gone, it's not going to be producing more toxins, but mycotoxins are much smaller than a mold spore. And so you can, for example, the industry uses HEPA filtration as a standard, which is 99.97% effective down to 0.3 microns.

So pretty small, it gets down to. The mycotoxins are much smaller than that. So we can HEPA till the cows come home, but that's not going to remove all those mycotoxins from a structure.

So the mold could be gone, but the mycotoxins that have been in the home are still there. And what do you do for that? Yeah, we use an advanced type of filtration that's much tighter than HEPA when we do our mycotoxin remediations.

And then we use an enzyme and botanical-based proprietary product that is clinically proven to biodegrade or biotransform mycotoxins. So it's been laboratory tested.

There's plenty of information on PubMed about using enzymes and or bacteria to biotransform mycotoxins. Well, we're not going to use bacteria, but we use a specialized blend of enzymes to get that worked out for us.

So we shouldn't, if we find mold, we shouldn't just pour bleach on it, right? Absolutely not. And I would even take that a step further, is that don't use a biocide.

Anything that's going to kill it, like I said, these oil can be a natural biocide, but then you're still stuck with dead mold. The proteins can still be there, and that's what you want to address and get rid of.

It's funny. I mean, I'm sure we've all been there where we've checked into a hotel and there's mold in the shower, you know, even like a nice hotel, like a Hilton, right?

I just remember on spring break, this happened to us once and they're like, okay, we'll take care of it. And they just sprayed it with bleach and I'm like, awesome.

Yeah. I travel with like a little air filter now. I mean, not that that's going to do everything, but you know, I mean, it's, it's rough.

Mycotoxins, Remediation, and Why Bleach Fails

So, so if someone, if a homeowner say has like, a basement flood or a pipe burst? Like, what should they do first before calling you? Well, obviously, get it dried out as quickly as possible.

That's the first thing. And then if you catch it quick enough, you may not even have an issue. But we always say, don't guess. No, especially because it can be impactful to your health.

So spend the money and get a good inspection just to validate that, hey, there are not problems. And then once you get that in a good inspection, there's a couple of things that it should entail.

It should tell you the what, what's there from a fungal species standpoint, mycotoxins, bacterial toxins, et cetera, whatever, what's there, the what, where, and the why.

So when we assess a home, you break it down into zones. Maybe upstairs is fine, but the basement needs to be treated or the HVAC system needs to be treated.

Spend the money to get the diagnosis and then get that proper assessment. And then it should also include the how. So how is it going to get resolved?

So those are kind of the key components of a good assessment. Yeah, I mean, it's so hard to convince people to spend money on these kind of things. But if you're living in a home that you're breathing in toxicity and it's affecting every single organ, we know mycotoxins can affect the brain down to the kidneys, down to the blood cells.

So, I mean, I guess like, how do you approach? Because I need tips, you know, when I'm talking to patients that this is something that you should save up for, even if you, like if you've never had it, right?

Almost like how you get your oil changed in your car, you should get your house checked out and make sure it's healthy, right? Yeah, as good as your treatments and therapies may be, if they keep going back and getting re-exposed, it's only going to be minimally effective.

I think most folks kind of understand that. And the ostrich approach, it doesn't solve itself. So the ostrich approach doesn't fix it. Just get good data.

And I know it can be a little frightening and scary, but at least know. And then and then work with a reputable company that can there's some projects that we will co-partner say if we'll write a protocol and they can do a DIY project oftentimes or we'll do a certain portion of the remediation if they're.

If they're super sensitive, we don't always recommend that. They probably, if they have high sensitivities to mold, they probably don't want to start tearing into a wall or what have you.

But just get the data and then work with someone that's going to be collaborative with you, I think is a great approach. Yeah, no, absolutely. So you kind of mentioned that if you dry it out, you might be okay.

Is this even behind the walls? So say there is a small leak, but it has time to dry or does it depend on the humidity or what kind of things should we be concerned about?

Yeah, boy, that's a great question. All right. So if it's behind the wall, obviously it takes longer for that period to dry. That's where when we do sampling, we'll do some of those intra cavity or interstitial space samples, find out what's going on in past issues.

We can cut without getting too mold nerdy. And my wife says I am a mold nerd, which I think it's a badge of honor. She means it well. I'm assuming. So we can break moles down into two categories.

We have hydrophilic moles which grow, they're water-loving moles like Stachybotrys or Cotomium. They grow, they require a lot of water to grow. Then we have these xerophilic moles like Aspergillus and Penicillium and Ultenary and Cladosporium that don't require water leak, just high humidity at the blooms.

You know, manage that moisture whether it's, obviously clamp a water leak straight away. A lot of our work is actually not water leak related. It's going to be humidity driven.

So make sure you maintain that the EPA recommends you maintain relative humidity between 30 and 50% ideally to avoid that mold growth. So what about if you had an in-home sauna?

Do you like those even because they're just high humidity all the time? Do you think that they're just full of mold? Yeah, we do. We don't see these wet saunas as we used to, but we see a lot of dry saunas.

A lot of folks use those when they detox, right? Even those get moist, you know, like from the body humidity. I mean, I guess you have time to dry in between and they use wood that is going to.

be you know dehydrate first but I mean I had one of my like single person one the bottom of it where I would sweat like got moldy I had to rip some of the wood out of the little thing.

We've treated a fair amount of them. So there's a process for that, where you abrade the wood and you surface treat it, et cetera. We don't see as much on the dry saunas every so often.

We've done work in some really nice homes that have wet saunas installed, and that's something I don't think I would ever put in my home, just because of the risk.

Yeah. Yeah. And, and you know, bathrooms, like good ventilation is important, right? And vent fans and, and all of that, right? There's the exhaust fans.

We had a project that we did in Colorado where it was a professor at the University of Boulder. He was sick. She was not. And one of the things she loved most in her life was to take this really hot, steamy shower.

So she would turn on the hot water a good 15, 20 minutes before, turn it like a sauna in there, go and take her shower. And then what happened, I mean, she's fine, but his health was deteriorating.

Well, when we did the assessment, all the pictures that were on the nightstands, et cetera, had aspergillus growth on the back of those pictures because of the humidity from her showers.

So running exhaust fans, we always recommend tying them into the light switches. That way, if the kids forget to run them, it's kind of built in. But yeah, that's really important to do.

Yeah. Well, okay, I like how you brought up the pictures.

Floods, Humidity, and Protecting Homes and Belongings

What if someone, you know, you go to a home, I'm sure this has happened so many times, and they have mold, you need to remediate it, but what do they do with their stuff that's in there?

Great question, and we get this a lot. So there's different conditions. So if we have like a condition two, which is settled spores, so that means there's mold floating there, it lands on it.

then it's a matter of treating those with advanced filtration, surface treatments. You can save a lot of that. If it's a porous item that has mold growth on it, then generally you're going to discard those items.

Now we have gone back, there's some sentimental things, things that are important like wedding albums and some of those things that we can go back and treat as opposed to discarding because they're just irreplaceable.

But generally on porous item, if you have fungal growth, you're just going to replace it. Yeah, and that's probably really hard. So that's why keeping the humidity low.

I mean, I feel like attics are a big problem and people keep their stuff in attics. Obviously basements, we know basements are a problem. But what would make an attic a problem?

Because yeah, we have a bunch of attics here and I'm like, these are probably not vented correctly. You know, it's on our to-do list as we moved into a new home, you know, eight months ago, you know, to get someone out here.

I mean, sadly, all we had time for was a little mold. I think they did an air sampling, which is better than nothing. But I had walked through the home, so if I can smell mold.

I mean, I really am good at it because I had mold in my house growing up. which probably led to the Hashimoto's, you know, all of those fun things. But attics, I mean, any tips like vent fans should be there?

I mean, I don't, like we had a house, you would think this was crazy, John, that it vented to the attic, the dryer vent was venting into our attic. instead of out.

I mean, the stuff that like people listening to this will be like, go check your home. Like you will be like, why did they do this? Because they just, you know, they don't, I don't know if they don't care if it's like we will, you know, perish for lack of knowledge.

Like, I don't know. This is why we're talking about it though. Yeah. Addicts are also, to back up, moles need three things to thrive. A complex carbon compound, oxygen, and moisture.

And the amount of moisture it needs depends on the type of mole that it is, right? So in an attic, an unconditioned space, there's always going to be a risk because you have the wood, the sheathing, all that, the deckness there.

That's all going to be a complex carbon compound and a food source. So what we do and I had to treat my attic last year about every three or four years I do spot treatments in my attic because it's humid and I'm going to get a certain amount of fungal growth.

It's to be expected. Now I don't spend a lot of time in my attic. I'm not overly exposed and my attic looks pretty good. But just know that it is always going to be a risk point.

There's a couple things to do, like proper ventilation you mentioned. Make sure, one of the things we see frequently, Dr. Jen is they'll come in, they'll blow in all this insulation and they don't put baffles.

And so it covers up the soft events so the addict can breathe. And so go up there, turn the lights off and see if you can see all your soft events. And so you get some airflow.

And attics are always going to be warmer, but they shouldn't be so much hotter than what's on the exterior if you have that good ventilation. So you may need to get some vents in there, but even with that, if you have the humidity, that's going to get some amount of mold growth.

So just check it every so often and do spot treatments. Yeah, that's great. And then, and they would work with their mold inspector about that. And I mean, I guess like how often should you have for the health of your home?

Obviously, if there's a change or a leak, but like just general maintenance or air ducts, like HVAC cleaning, how often should we do checkups? So the HVAC, I'm glad you brought that up.

The HVAC can be our best friend to avoid mold growth or it could actually be our worst enemy because it's the lungs of the home. So always recommend getting them serviced every six months.

The EPA recommends using a good MERV M-E-R-V 13 or 16 to help filter out those contaminants because you are going to get mold in your home just from opening the doors and windows and that kind of thing.

So use your HVAC system as kind of like your whole house indoor air quality machine. We have folks that will have us come out annually and treat their HVACs because they're super sensitive.

But if, if you haven't had your ducks cleaned in say four or five years, probably a good idea to get those, all that particulate matter that can get in there, like the skin cells and dust mites and because that could be a good food source for mold to grow.

Yeah. Well, and that goes back to what we were talking about the plaster, you know, versus drywall, which drywall is just like mold food. Like such a good substrate, right?

Gosh, I just, well, let's talk about this. I think it's so interesting. Some people like think that they can have a mold, build a home that will be completely mold free.

forever. I mean, what do you think about that? Because I say no, I say if there's running water in the home, you could have, you know, like people are talking about like glass, just like living in a glass house, which I think seems insane.

But I had a consulting doctor with a patient of mine tell him that and I'm like, this is just not and he told him to move to Costa Rica and live in a window house.

And I'm like, that is one of the most high estimated it was just so crazy. So I would love your opinion on that. Yeah, as cool as it sounds like to live in a window house in Costa Rica.

No, I wouldn't. That would be my recommendation. So, molds are ubiquitous. They're common in our environments. Molds are nature's recyclers, right? That's what they do.

So, anytime that we open the door, we open a window, we walk in, we're going to get some exposure, and that's okay. What we don't want is obviously mold growth inside of a structure, and you don't want to have elevations of mold when compared to the outside.

So just manage it. We try to be pretty data driven. Just know what the facts are. Know what your counts are. If you're not feeling well and maybe you've got some upper respiratory or you're starting to see some spotting on the ceilings in the bathrooms and that kind of thing, or check the HVAC vents, look inside your air handler.

If you're starting to see some things, then go back and dig a little bit deeper or have someone come out and take a look at it and test it. Some things look like mold and they're not.

It's just debris. but a good surface sample, which is fairly inexpensive, will tell you exactly what's there and how much. Yeah, that's great. That's really important because, I mean, a lot of this just seems probably scary to people listening, you know, and sometimes they, you know, they feel hopeless, especially if they find out they do have mold.

How do you deal with that on your end because sometimes You know, patients struggle with, well, do I just move and disclose there's mold, even though you don't have to?

You know, I mean… It's hard because I feel like some homes, because they don't have the right remediation and inspection, that people say stuck in them and then they just think that the next home they'll move into will have mold and all of that.

Because what, 50% of homes have mold?

Attics, HVAC Systems, and Ongoing Home Maintenance

Yeah. Our thought process on that is it's almost like the old saying, the devil that you know. And so if you stop and think about the cost of moving, It costs a closing, uprooting your lives, getting a new house, maybe kids in a new school, all that good stuff.

Getting the house properly diagnosed and treated and thinking really boils down to getting to the root cause. That's where that good inspection comes in.

And so if the issue just happens to be elevated humidity and say that it's because there's tears in the ducts that run through the attic and it's pulling moist air, it's cheaper or less expensive to get that fixed and get the house remitted as opposed to moving.

But those are all factors that people have to weigh in and see what works well for them. But oftentimes, just get the facts, get what's going on in your home, understand the data, and then make a good decision based upon it.

Yeah. Well, how do you actually tell you're getting a good inspector? I know you guys are located multiple locations around. I mean, and I guess the question that goes with this, you know, our insurance, does insurance play a role?

Like if there was a pipe break or something? Yeah, that's, we get asked this quite a bit and oftentimes it can. So I'm in the state of Florida. Florida has mandates a certain amount of mold coverage on their homeowners insurance

policies.

Now, it may or may not be a covered event. So if it's a pipe burst, I think generally that gets covered by insurance. But if it's, say, a maintenance issue, I didn't maintain my HVAC system and I allowed humidity to elevate, then insurance may say, John, that's kind of on you.

So it's always, you can always run it by your insurance company to see if it's a qualified event and that can certainly help out. And it can be, maybe the water event is covered and, but you don't have any mold coverage.

Mold coverage is really inexpensive to get as a writer. And so if you get a writer, yeah, get a writer on your insurance policy, talk to your agent and see if he can get one on there.

And that may cover a lot of those issues for you. Okay, when you say get a writer, what is on your homeowner's insurance? Yeah, so your standard homeowner's policy in many states won't include mold coverage in there, but oftentimes it is available as an add-on so you can get a mold coverage by talking to your insurance agent and having them add it to your policy.

And is that usually pretty pricey or does it depend on where you live? Yeah, it generally isn't that expensive to get. Okay, and so say you have an inspector come in and there is mold and that's on your policy, the insurance company should have to cover remediation or part of it?

Yeah, if it's a covered event, it's, again, it gets back to if it's… Not the humidity, yes. Yeah, if it was maintenance that I didn't keep up with, then my insurance company is probably not going to pay that.

But if it's a covered event, I… a storm that caused damage or a water leak or pipe burst, then those things oftentimes are covered. Alright so everyone call your insurance agent today after this episode.

Well because it's crazy because you know a lot of the times it's not covered. I mean I guess that's so tough because what if you're going to get it inspected just to see the how like how healthy your home is and you don't know.

I mean I guess if the basement has a history of flooding or something, maybe that would be covered. It's tough. The insurance company will probably not try to pay, right?

Well, you always want to assume positive intent, and I think they'll want to do that. But if it's not a covered event, they're going to be hard pressed to pay for it for sure.

But you've had some positive experiences with insurance companies. Absolutely. Good. Okay, that's great. Well, I'm shocked. I did not know Florida could have mold coverage on their insurance because I've heard from a few patients that have had homes in the area like St.

Pete and Naples that got flooded that the insurance wasn't doing anything. Hmm. I'm not sure what that, what that would be. Maybe it didn't cover hurricane like due to hurricane.

So, but I don't know. I think it just, it depends, but, but definitely like watching those homes, you know, with like water filling the whole first floor.

I like was like, Oh my goodness. And then the other horror story, you know, living down south, you hear is so say, you know, it is their second home and they're not.

renting it out or having anyone check on it and the AC goes off, bam, the whole house is high humidity and mold's forming. It's scary. It can cover the walls.

We've seen that. Oftentimes, we'll have individuals that will save a little money on their utility bills. They'll crank it up to 80 82 on the thermostat.

And so the AC unit doesn't cycle enough to pull the moisture out of the air. And then there is fuzzy all over coffee makers, cabinets, closets. Yeah, we see that is not uncommon.

that would be a nightmare of mine like if i would have a nightmare it would be mold all over a house like that yeah one of the things you touched on i wanted to circle back on and talk about a good inspection because a good inspection doesn't not just find what's there it also finds what's not there and why that's important and i think this gets overlooked a lot is because whenever you're building a scope of work you want it to be based on science and so if Like I said, it's just the basement and you've ruled out that the other areas of the home are fine.

Sometimes contractors will want to come in and treat the entire structure. And sometimes if the data supports it, that needs to be done.

Insurance Coverage, Hope, and Final Advice

But if the data says, no, you don't, it's just isolated to this area, then you really right size your remediation. And so as an encouragement, Pay for the data.

That way you get a right size remediation because that inspection should be pennies on the dollar compared to the remediation. If that makes sense. Yeah, it really does.

Well, what would you like to leave our listeners with? You know, just, I know this is your passion and you are so involved in advocacy for mold and that is so important because it's just such a missed opportunity for health and chronic disease and reversing chronic disease.

Yeah, I think I would, one, there's hope. It's not necessarily as bad. We've, what, 17 years of doing this now, and there's only been a handful of problems that we've seen where it's like, you really have to make a decision on whether this is the place for you.

Generally, these problems can be solved if you get to the root of them. So there is hope. And make good data-driven decisions of them, as I mentioned before.

Get the facts. I know it's emotional. It's almost like cancer for the body, mold is for the house. I think there's some analogy there. But just get the facts, face it head on, work with a reputable company, whether it's a company like ours or somebody else, and don't use those caustic chemicals to try to treat it.

No bleach. Yes, no bleach. Okay, John, we're going to do some lightning round questions to wrap up. What career did you almost choose? And I think you answered this earlier.

What career did I almost choose? I've always wanted to be a chef. I love food. I love to cook, but I was in the financial services industry prior. Yeah.

Yeah. Awesome. Awesome. What's your favorite habit that rescues a tough day? I enjoy just going out with my wife and we live on a canal and just watching nature.

That's a good way to unwind for me. Yes, and reset that autonomic nervous system to parasympathetic. That's great. What is one wellness rule that you happily break sometimes?

We enjoy a nice glass of red wine. Okay. Yeah. So I don't know if that's a break of the rule or not, but it's, uh, for men, you're allowed one a day. Women were not allowed anymore because estrogen breakdown, but men, you can still have your glass and it's fine.

So, um, last one, and it's one word only. What's the one word you want our listeners to carry on through the week with them? Hope. Yes. That's great. Well, thank you so much, John.

It's been so informative and so much hope with Mold. How can everyone find your company Mold Pros and you?

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T-H-E-M-O-L-D-P-R-O-S.com. And then our email is info at themoldpros.com. And we'd like to do something special for your listeners. If they have questions, if they've done their own DIY testing, or they have some concerns, we'll give a free 30 minute consult.

Just have them say, hey, we heard you on Dr. Jen's podcast. We had some questions. We wanted to speak with a professional and we'll certainly visit with them.

We'll analyze their labs and give our opinions on those as well. Oh, that's amazing. Yes. Thank you. That's so generous of you. Cause I'm sure so many people have questions about the next step and is this what's causing my health problem or why is my kid sick all the time or breathing problems and it could be more.

So thank you for that. And we really appreciate your time and your passion today. All right. Thank you. God bless. Appreciate you being, uh, appreciate you having me on the show.

Yeah. Thank you. Thanks.