

## WHAT TO DO

### 2. PREVENT COCKROACHES AND RODENTS FROM TAKING UP RESIDENCE IN YOUR HOME.

#### Occupants of the dwelling

##### PREVENT

- ▶ Keep the kitchen clean.
- ▶ Clean grease from the stove.
- ▶ Keep food in sealed containers.
- ▶ Cover garbage.
- ▶ Keep outside doors and screens closed.

##### FIX

- ▶ Quickly tell the owner if there are cockroaches or rodents in your home.
  - If the owner doesn't take action, contact the borough or municipal inspections office.

#### Owners, managers or administrators

##### PREVENT

- ▶ Make sure that the building's garbage containers are sealed and the area where they are located is clean.
- ▶ Fill holes and cracks in the building.
- ▶ Identify and fix water infiltration and excess humidity sources.
- ▶ Put up screens.
- ▶ Repair broken pipes (against rats).

##### FIX

- ▶ Hire a qualified pest controller (exterminator) to exterminate cockroaches or rodents throughout the building.



## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

#### For questions related to health:

Contact your doctor or call Info-Santé at 8-1-1.

#### For questions related to housing:

Régie du logement: 514-873-2245 or [www.rdl.gouv.qc.ca](http://www.rdl.gouv.qc.ca)

MSSS, INSPQ, SHQ and SCHL Web site: "Keys to Improving Air Quality in Your Home": [www.habitation.gouv.qc.ca/en/qualite\\_air](http://www.habitation.gouv.qc.ca/en/qualite_air)

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC): 514-283-2222 or [www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca](http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca)

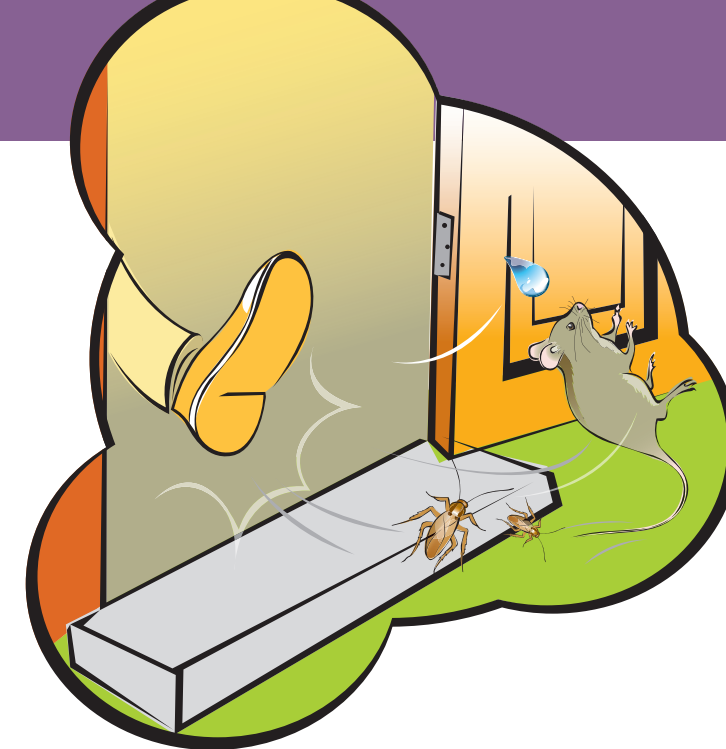
A number of associations and organizations provide support for tenants or building owners who require help. Contact your municipality or consult the Internet or your local telephone book.

To reach someone from the inspections office, contact your borough or municipality.

This pamphlet is one of a series of documents published as part of a study on the respiratory health of children carried out by the Direction de santé publique de l'Agence de la santé et des services sociaux de Montréal. For more information, go to [www.dsp.santemontreal.qc.ca](http://www.dsp.santemontreal.qc.ca).



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# Breathe easy: Rid your home of moulds, cockroaches and rodents!



## MOULDS, COCKROACHES AND RODENTS = RESPIRATORY HEALTH PROBLEMS

Excess humidity, moulds, dust mites, cockroaches and rodents can all cause or aggravate respiratory diseases such as:

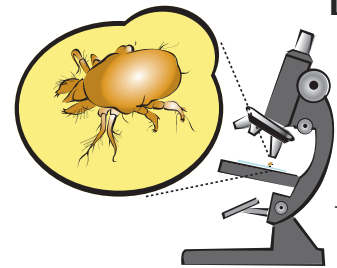
- ▶ asthma
- ▶ respiratory infections (e.g. bronchitis, sinusitis, pneumonia)
- ▶ allergic rhinitis in winter (runny nose, congestion and cough during the cold months, in the absence of a cold or flu)



## HOW DO THEY AFFECT RESPIRATORY HEALTH?

### Excess humidity and moulds

Water infiltrations and excess humidity can facilitate mould growth. Moulds release invisible particles into the air and can irritate your eyes, nose, throat and bronchial tubes. They can also cause or aggravate rhinitis, asthma and respiratory infections.

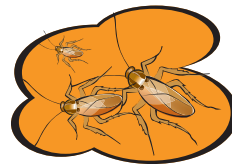


### Dust mites

Dust mites look like microscopic spiders. They are not visible to the naked eye and live mostly on bedding and in carpets. They thrive in high humidity. Dust contaminated with dust mite excrement can become airborne, be breathed in and cause rhinitis and asthma.

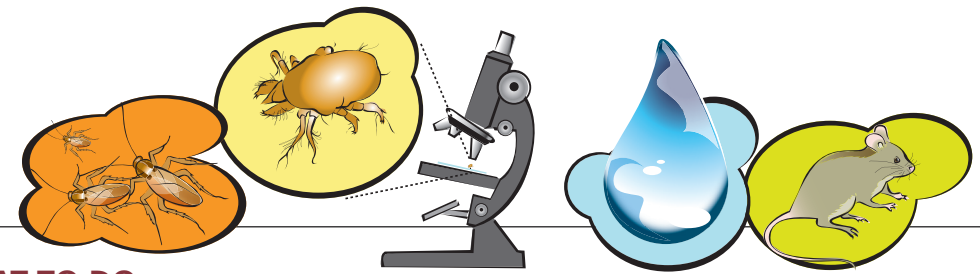
### Cockroaches

Dust contaminated with cockroach excrement can become airborne, be breathed in and cause rhinitis and asthma.



### Mice and rats (rodents)

Mouse or rat fur, saliva and urine can set off respiratory allergies and aggravate asthma.



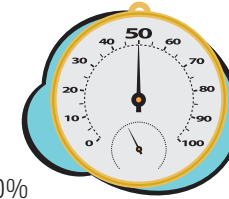
## WHAT TO DO

### 1. ELIMINATE EXCESS HUMIDITY AND MOULDS FROM YOUR HOME

#### Occupants of the dwelling

##### PREVENT

- ▶ Measure the humidity level with a hygrometer (inexpensive models are sold in stores).
- ▶ Maintain the humidity level at 50% when heating (maximum of 35% when it's very cold outside).
- ▶ Use a dehumidifier, if needed.
- ▶ Use the ventilation systems in the kitchen and bathroom.
- ▶ Avoid drying clothes indoors or in a dryer that doesn't vent outdoors.
- ▶ Clean small mould spots off non-porous surfaces (e.g. around the bathtub) with a cleaning product.



##### FIX

- ▶ Quickly notify the owner of any significant water damage or infiltration, of walls that are constantly damp, of excess humidity or mould problems.
  - If the owner doesn't take action, contact the borough or municipal inspections office.

#### Owners, managers or administrators

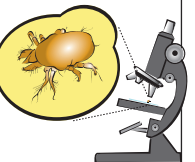
##### PREVENT

- ▶ Identify and fix water infiltration and excess humidity sources:
  - Roof
  - Masonry, windows, foundation
  - Crawl space and drain backup
  - Plumbing
- ▶ Clean water damage within 48 hours

##### FIX

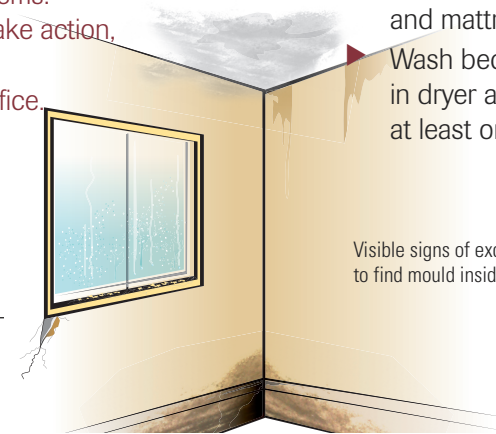
- ▶ To remove mould, follow the recommendations of the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation: [www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca](http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca).

## IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE I CAN DO ABOUT DUST MITES?



#### Occupants of the dwelling

- ▶ Put dust mite covers on pillows and mattresses.
- ▶ Wash bedding in hot water and put in dryer at the highest setting at least once a week.



Visible signs of excess humidity and moulds. It is not uncommon to find mould inside walls.