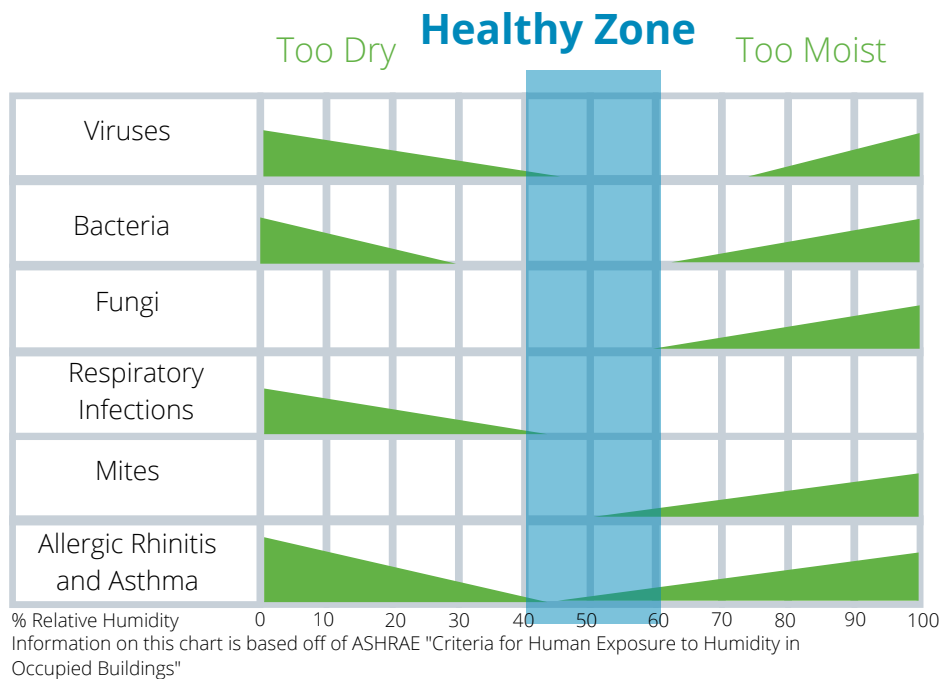


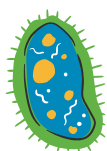
# Viruses and Humidity

Relative humidity (RH), or the amount of moisture in the air, can affect a virus's ability to survive in an environment. In certain conditions, viruses and other respiratory irritants thrive. **Viruses, like COVID-19, tend to function better in environments that are too dry and too moist. Keeping your home in the 40-60% RH range, along with frequently cleaning your home and washing your hands, will lead to less spread of the virus.**



A decrease in bar height indicates a decrease in effect for each of the items.

**Note:** ANTHC usually advises occupants to keep their RH between 30-50%. This is the range for keeping respiratory irritants, like mold, at a minimum in AK. Right now, we are focused on reducing the spread of COVID-19. 40-60% RH is best for limiting the spread of viruses like COVID-19.



If your RH levels are **too low**, there is bigger risk of: being exposed to viruses (like COVID-19), bacteria, catching a respiratory illness, having allergic reactions, and asthma attacks.

If your RH levels are **too high**, there is bigger risk of being exposed to: viruses (like COVID-19), bacteria, mold and other asthma triggers.



## How to know your relative humidity:

- **Use a hygrometer.** A hygrometer is a device you can purchase that will tell you the RH of the area, and if your home is too dry or too moist.
- **Indicators of RH:**
  - **Sweaty windows or mold.** If your windows are sweaty and/or you can see or smell mold, your home is too moist. Turn on fans, or open a window or door for a little bit to let the moisture out and fresh air in. For cleaning mold, see A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture, and Your Home: <https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2016-10/documents/moldguide12.pdf>
  - **Static electricity.** If you get shocked a lot in your home, that is an indication that it is too dry. Use a humidifier or boil water on the stove to increase humidity. If your windows get sweaty, turn off the humidifier, stop boiling water.