



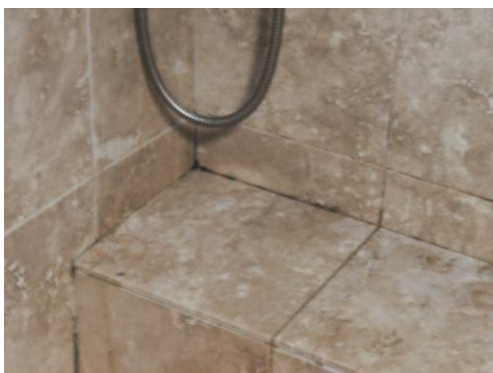
## Basic Knowledge and Facts about Shower Problems

### What is there behind the tiles in the shower?

#### Dark spots on the grout?

A **common misconception** about tile and grout is that they are **waterproof**. Once you install tile in your shower you have a big waterproof box that will last forever. Is that what you think? Tile and stone (as well as grout) will actually retain water. How much water it retains is directly related to the density of the tile. For instance, porcelain tile is much more dense than travertine. This means that travertine will retain more moisture and allow more water to seep through to your substrate.

Grout is a cement-based material, and like all cement-based materials, is not completely waterproof. Since grout is not waterproof, that **moisture gets** past the surface and **into the wall**. Newer showers have cement board behind the tile instead of drywall and can be coated with a waterproof covering. But the moisture still must go somewhere. Having a fan on to **remove moisture** in the bathrooms can help. The **frequent shower cleaning** with the solutions to **kill mold spores** can reduce mold growth. The dryer environment – **the shower door always must be kept opened**. There are caulking materials that can reduce mold growth. Most sealers have anti mold properties so **reseal** a shower a **couple times a year**.



However, there are ways to tell if **moisture is present** behind the tiles. Look for a **black residue** on the caulking. Rub the caulking vigorously and try to remove the residue. If the dark spots on the grout **cannot be removed** by cleaning or its appeared back in the few weeks that indicates the **problem behind the tiles**. That means water is working its way behind the tiles. The **residue is mold** and is possibly present behind the tile. Often, a problem isn't noted until long after severe damage has occurred. Mold, a fungus that thrives in warm, moist and dark areas, loves to hide behind your shower's tiles. The fungi can grow without someone or something interfering with it and can spread quickly through the wallboard behind the tile. Loose tiles are another indication of mold growing behind the tile.

**As mold grows**, it eats away at the grout and caulking holding the tiles in place. Because it is important to the health of the shower, the house and its occupants **the tiles and/or wallboard need to be replaced**.

**Note, inhaling Mold is Dangerous to your health.**

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