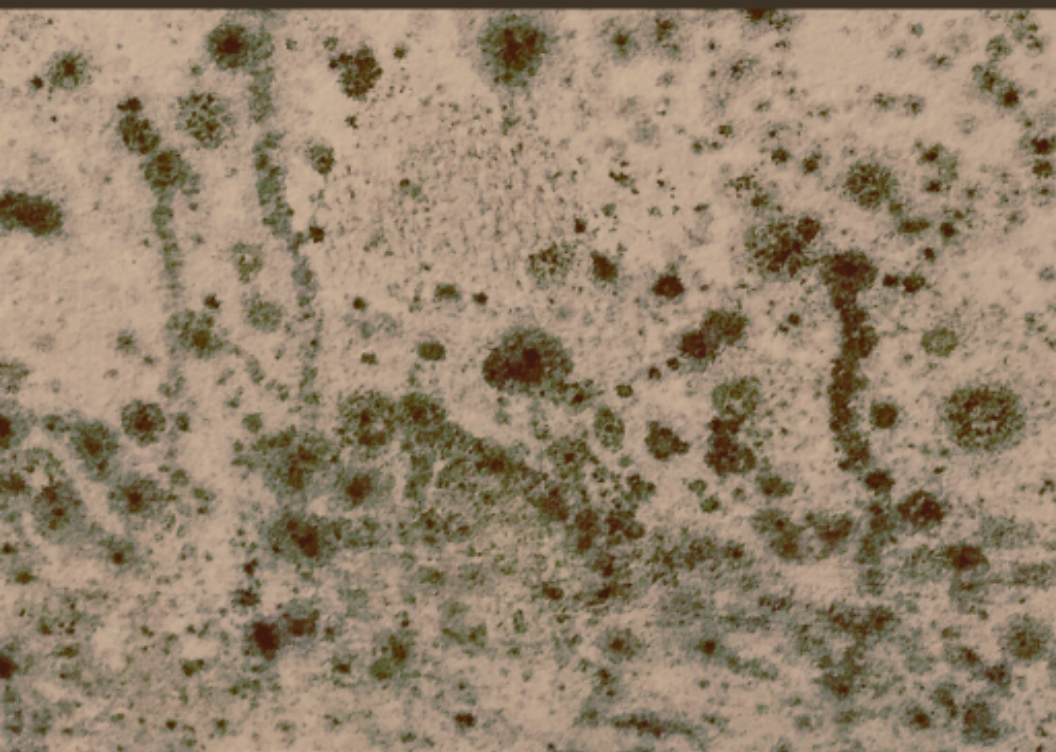


M O U L D

THE GREAT PRETENDER



Could it be ruining your health?

G A W A I N F R A S E R



Our Vision

Vibrant healthy families and communities through shared knowledge, connection and empowerment.

Our Mission

To provide personalised, precision medicine in partnership with individuals, families and the community using an ancestral, root-cause approach.

“Mould transforms plant debris into nutrients for new plant growth. So mould is pretty useful - OUTSIDE. NOT inside. Once it gets a taste of easy living indoors, mould gets out of control.”

Dr Jill Crista,
from her book, “Break the Mould”

Prologue

Cyclone Gabrielle focussed the mind for all of us who have cared for folks whose houses, livelihoods and legacies were washed away in 2023.

We are dedicated to helping those who live in damp or water damaged housing to become equipped with the knowledge to change their situation but most importantly to combat the effects of mould in their environment.

We hope you find this introduction to the subject useful and if we can help you in your journey to health, all the better.

Chapter 1

Moulds – The Sneaky Blighters in Your Flat

Moulds are those fuzzy, sometimes slimy, patches you spot in damp corners of your house – maybe behind the couch or in the bathroom where the ventilation's a bit naff. Here in New Zealand, with our wet winters and humid summers, mould loves to make itself at home. They're fungi, right? Tiny organisms that thrive in moist, warm spots, munching on anything organic – think damp wood, wallpaper, even your old takeaways if you've left them too long.

Mould spreads by throwing out microscopic spores into the air, which can enter your airways without you even noticing. Most of the time, small amounts aren't a big deal, but if your home's got a serious mould problem – like black splotches creeping up the walls – it can start causing problems.

Some folks are more sensitive than others, and it's not just about a mouldy smell or ugly decor. Mould can mess with your health, especially if it's pumping out nasty stuff like mycotoxins, which we'll get to later. For now, know that keeping your place dry and airy is your best defence against these sneaky blighters.

Chapter 2

How Mould Gets Under Your Skin (Or Into Your Lungs)

If you've ever walked into a mouldy room and felt your nose get all itchy or your chest tighten up then that's your body saying, "Oi, something's not right here." Mould affects people in different ways. For some, it's just a bit of a sniffle or itchy eyes – like hay fever's less glamorous cousin. But for others, especially if you've got asthma or a dodgy immune system, it can be a proper pain in the backside.

Breathing in mould spores can irritate your lungs, leading to coughing, wheezing, or even full-on asthma attacks. Some folks get skin rashes from touching mouldy surfaces, while others feel shattered all the time, like they've been hit by a bus.

Kids and older people tend to cop it worse, and if you're living in a damp, mouldy rental (cheers, NZ housing), it can chip away at your health over time. The kicker? It's not always obvious mould's the culprit - you might be feeling crook without knowing why. That's where mycotoxins come in, making the whole situation a bit more sinister.

Chapter 3

Mycotoxins – The Toxic Mould Sidekicks

Right, let's talk mycotoxins. These are the nasty chemicals some moulds produce – not all moulds, mind you, but the really dodgy ones like *Stachybotrys* (aka black mould). Mycotoxins are like mould's secret weapon, and they can seriously mess you up. They're not just floating around for a laugh; they can get into your body through breathing, eating contaminated food (like mouldy bread or nuts), drinking mould -tainted coffee or even through your skin.

Once they're in, mycotoxins can cause all sorts of havoc. We're talking headaches, brain fog, dizziness, gut issues, and even weird neurological stuff like tingling or memory problems.

In bad cases, they've been linked to chronic fatigue or immune system breakdowns. Here's the rub: mycotoxins don't always show up with a neon sign saying, "I'm here!" They can build up slowly, making you feel like rubbish without a clear reason.

In New Zealand, where damp homes are common, mycotoxin exposure's a real worry, especially in poorly maintained houses. The good news? You can fight back, but first, you've gotta know it's there.

Chapter 4

Diagnosing the Mouldy Culprit

Figuring out if mould or mycotoxins are making you sick is a bit like playing detective. You might go to the doctor feeling like death warmed up, but unless they're clued up on mould, they might just pass you some antihistamines and call it a day. Diagnosing mould-related illness isn't always straightforward because the symptoms – fatigue, headaches, respiratory stuff – look like heaps of other things.

A good GP or naturopath might start by asking about your living situation. Got damp walls? Musty smells? That's a red flag. They might run blood tests to check for inflammation or immune markers, but rarely ask for specific tests for mycotoxins (we can offer these tests through our clinic, Functional Again).

We use urine tests to accurately detect mycotoxin levels, so spotting them is non-invasive and really quite straightforward. We are the functional/integrative health types who know their stuff on this.

The key is ruling out other root-causes and linking your symptoms to that hidden patch of mould in the flat you're renting or in water damaged buildings. Oh, and don't be afraid to push for answers – you know your body best.

At Functional Again here in Gisborne we can help and support you through the process of diagnosing and managing mould and mycotoxin illness.

Chapter 5

Natural Remedies to Kick Mould to the Curb

Alright, you've sussed out mould's the problem – now what? First off, sort out your environment. Get a dehumidifier, crack open the windows, and give those mouldy spots a good scrub with vinegar or tea tree oil (it's a cracking natural anti-fungal). If the mould's deep in the walls, you might need professionals to rip it out, but let's talk about healing your body naturally.

Diet's a biggie. Mycotoxins love to hang out in your gut, so load up on clean, whole foods – think veggies, quality meats, nuts and low-sugar fruits like berries. Sugar, grains and refined carbs are the go-to foods for fungi in your gut so it's important to starve them of their favourite foods.

Prepping your body is essential prior to starting any binders or a detoxification protocol. Our clinic can support you through functional testing and help identify nutritional deficiencies that might hamper your detox journey or even leave you worse off if not addressed prior to starting a

detox. We advise on high quality probiotics, helping your gut and immune system stay strong and the right combination of herbs and nutrients to support your liver, which is working overtime when you do a detox.

Some folks swear by activated charcoal or bentonite clay to bind toxins and flush them out, but go easy and talk to us first. Binders cause your body to mobilise toxins and without all systems working, you could get worse rather than better. The wrong binders can just clog you up!

Saunas or infrared therapy can help you sweat out toxins – we can guide you through a safe program of infra-red sauna to suit your needs.

Essential oils like oregano or eucalyptus in a diffuser can clear your airways and fight mould in the air. And hydration – chug water like it's your job. Finally, rest up. Your body's fighting a battle, so give it a break. These remedies aren't a silver bullet, but they're a very good start to getting you back on track.

At Functional Again in Gisborne we have a comprehensive approach to clearly identify and manage your symptoms. Also recognise that if you are sick, other family members may also be suffering - but in a different way to you - mould is a great pretender.

With the help of a structured questionnaire we can identify patients that have a high likelihood of mould toxicity and

through directed testing we can confirm mould colonisation in your system and identify mould toxins.

We provide a range of treatment options including diet, supplementation, lifestyle modification and our infrared sauna to give you the best chance of ridding your body of harmful mycotoxins.

If you know someone who may be suffering from mould-related illness, please pass this eBook onto them.

If you're keen to investigate the role mould is playing in your symptoms, check us out on our website:

<https://functionalagain.com/beating-mould>

To book a FREE 15 minute Discovery Call with me, click [HERE](#)

About the Author

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Gawain joined the team at Functional Again Gisborne in 2022. He transitioned into Functional Medicine from the Emergency Room to assist the growing number of patients suffering from chronic and complex medical problems, including mould-related illness.

Combining root cause medicine with dietary improvements, lifestyle modification, natural supplementation with proven western medicine methodologies and testing offers a unique and improved approach to healthcare in the community.