



How Healthy Is Your Home?

10 Tips for Home Health

Maintaining good health isn't only about physical activity and nutrition, sustaining a healthy home environment is also essential to protecting your health and that of your family. On average, people spend more than 50% of their time at home so make it as safe as it can be. Practice these tips for home safety to minimize health threats to you, your family, and the environment.

- 1) Out with the Dust!** Remove dust and mold at least once a week with a damp cloth and vacuum carpet and fabric-covered furniture to reduce dust build-up. Exposure to dust mites and mold often triggers asthma and allergies. Use a humidifier during summer months to prevent the growth of mold and mildew.
- 2) Breathe Well.** To improve the quality of air circulation at home, properly ventilate rooms where a fuel-burning appliance is used. Use appliances that vent outside whenever possible. This can help prevent the risk of respiratory problems due to NO₂ (nitrogen dioxide) exposure.
- 3) Clean Food = Healthy Food!** For thick-skin fruits such as cantaloupe and other melons, bacteria can be transferred to the inside when the fruit is cut or peeled. Prevent this by rubbing the firm-skin fruits and vegetables under running tap water or scrub them with a clean vegetable brush.
- 4) Be safe and sound.** Ensure that your smoke alarms are working properly each month and hold fire drills to better educate your family on exit procedures during a fire or emergency.
- 5) One step cleans ALL!** Dust with worn-out wool clothing or material. Wool creates static when rubbed against a surface, so one wipe is all that's needed to keep your furniture dust-free. No need to polish or spray!
- 6) Don't play hide and seek with GERMS!** Clean objects you'd never think to clean. Several daily household items are the top causes of allergies and have negative impacts on your health. Common areas where germs are found include telephone receivers, shower curtains, automatic dishwashers, and HVAC filters.
- 7) Lighten up.** Place bright lights over stairs, steps and on landings. Keep the stairs clear of clutter. Using night lights in hallways can prevent home injuries due to unclear vision.
- 8) Cold is better than Hot!** Anytime you don't use water from your faucet for 6 hours or longer, "flush" the cold-water pipes by running the water until it becomes as cold as it will get to rinse out the high levels of lead. Low or high levels of lead can cause serious health effects to your central nervous system.
- 9) Who to call?** Keep a list of emergency contacts in a visible area. Make it easily accessible for you, your family, or a babysitter to reach the appropriate contact(s) in case of emergencies.
- 10) Too hot!** Your water heater should never exceed 120°F to prevent the risk of burns.

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