

Healthy Home Key Messages & Check List

Air Flow and Circulation

Air Circulation

- Supply vents should be uncovered and able to blow and circulate room air. Return vents take air back to system, over the filter and back into the occupied space.
- Fiberglass filters should be changed every 30 days.
 1. Fiberglass filters are not good at filtering out smaller particles because of the loosely woven material- only catch bigger particles.
- Pleated filters should be changed every three months.
 1. They are more expensive but last longer
 2. Can catch smaller particles that contribute respiratory illnesses.
- Pleated filters should have a MERV rating of at least 8.

Temperature and thermal comfort

- Temperature should be set at 74-79 deg. in the summer. 68-72 deg. in the winter.
- Watch for condensation build up on inside of windows or other cool surfaces.
- Can purchase an inexpensive humidity gauge (\$3 - \$20).
- Relative humidity should be kept in between 30-50% to keep things dry.

Carbon Dioxide, CO₂ (Level II only)

- Amount of indoor Carbon Dioxide is a measure of ventilation adequacy. Good ventilation = less than 1100ppm indoors.

Particulates

- Sprays, cooking oils, air fresheners, incense, smoke, etc.
- Range hood or vent fan that exhausts to the outside.

Allergens & Dust

Allergens:

Dust Mite

- Hidden. Love Humidity
- Decrease the humidity levels in the home.
- To kill mites, wash linens at least once a week in 130 deg. water or consider dry cleaning.
- Keep stuffed animals on shelves and off the bed. Throw stuffed animals in dryer for a few minutes.

- Get allergen covers for mattress, box spring, and pillows.
- Try not to have drapes in the child's room.

Roaches

- Have allergen protein in the body parts, feces and excretions that cause allergic reaction to people.
- Nocturnal. If you see them during day, got pest problem. Love warm places. Can fit in a gap the size of a dime.
- Suggest integrated pest control: decrease food and water sources and make sure gaps and cracks are covered.

Molds

- Mold issues in homes usually means there are moisture issues or a water leak somewhere in the home.
- Some issues can be easily solved by finding the source of the moisture problem first. Remove mold with detergent and water, bleach or other chemicals are not required.

Pollen

- Season: February through September
- Generally people are most allergic to Ragweed and Pollen.
- Best way to alleviate this problem during the season is to keep the air conditioning on and the windows down.
- Do not dry clothes out on a clothes line

Animal Dander:

Dogs and Cats

- Try to keep dog or cat out of the bedroom and off of the furniture. Try to keep dog or cat outside as much as possible.
- Make sure to clean dog/cat hairs up by vacuuming.
- Wash dog on a regular basis
- Cat dander flakes off when dry.
- Keep pets off bedding & out of bedrooms.
- Wash bedding on a regular basis- weekly

Moisture Control

Moisture Sources

- Sinks, Hot water heater, air conditioning, dryers, washing machines, gas stove while cooking all create moisture

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- Use exhaust ventilation often to reduce humidity in bath & kitchen
- High humidity levels can lead to mold/bacterial growth and increase viral illnesses
- Home being too dry can also cause issues- dry irritated throats, sinus iss headaches

Humidity

- Want indoor relative humidity between 30-50%
- Can purchase humidity gauge for \$3-\$20 and move it around the home to measure and keep track of indoor moisture.

Mold- See mold discussion above

Chemical Exposure

Lead Paint Hazards

- Home built before 1978 must have a lead disclosure for anyone leaving in the home, so that they are aware if the home has been exposed to lead paint.
- Children age six and below should be routinely checked for lead exposure.
- Children like to place things into their mouths.
- Watch for flaking paint chips around window seals and discuss chalking.

VOCs

- Volatile Organic Compounds
- Results from off-gassing. (Ex- Perfume is released into the air when it “boils” or volatilizes from the surface of skin upon contact resulting in a VOC fragrance).
- Anything that has a scent is a VOC. Ex: building materials, dry cleaning, perfume, candles, new carpet.
- Keep different VOC sources to a minimum, if possible.
- Be mindful of what you are spraying into the air. Different fragrances can cause respiratory symptoms for sensitive persons.

Pesticides

- Can be really hazardous for children to be exposed to.
- Foggers and sprays don't work well.
- Sprays should be used very sparingly. if necessary to kill specific bug
- Use bait traps, traps, gels instead

Radon Gas

- Radon gas is a radioactive gas that comes from the surrounding rock layers near homes.
- It enters homes through basements, crawlspaces and cracks and gaps.
- All homes should be tested for Radon.
- If results >4pci/L then re-test, still high, consider Radon removal system.

Integrated Pest Management

- Suggest integrated pest control, decrease food and water sources and make sure gaps and cracks are blocked or covered to prevent use
- If this doesn't work, boric acid bait traps, gels can be used. If not, an IPM pest control service is best.
- Make sure that family is out of the home for at least 24hrs and to ventilate the area by opening windows before re-entering.

Combustion Gas By-products:

CH⁴

- Methane or Natural Gas
- Is odorless. Stinky smell is added for safety
- Indicates there is a gas leak.
- Should shut off source immediately, evacuate the area to a safe place and call Gas Co. or Fire Dept. for help.

CO

- Carbon Monoxide
- By-product of gas appliances.
- Should install a CO detector.
- Should place detector as close as possible to the family's bedrooms.
- CO detector alarm at a low level in order to give the family enough time to get out of the home safely.

NO²

- Nitrogen Dioxide
- From appliances also.
- Respiratory irritant at lox concentrations

Home Chemical Use

- Should be aware of chemical poisoning
- Be sure to use child-proof safety precautions.
- Sprays should be avoided if possible. Wipes or pouring out chemicals should be utilized first.

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Safety & Injury Prevention

Family Comments:

_____ Basic Fire Safety

- Make sure smoke detectors are functional.
- Change battery at least once a year.
- Make sure a smoke detector is on each level of the home.
- Make sure a smoke detector is placed near bedrooms or in bedrooms.
- Test detectors at least once a month
- Make sure the family has an escape plan.
- Fire extinguisher mounted in kitchen area near exit for quick access when needed.

Notes

_____ Basic Electrical Safety

- Receptacle plug covers
- Use outlets with reset buttons if w/in 5 ft of water source- Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI)
- Make sure outlets are not overloaded with too many cords

_____ Slip and Fall Hazards

- Be sure to have adequate lighting
- Railing down stairs
- Clutter-free

Healthy Home Specialist

OTHER:

_____ Asthma Education (*Asthma Educators only*)

- Do the child have an Asthma Action Plan?
- Do the family and child (if applicable) know the plan?
- Know location of AA Plan.
- Go through most recent plan with family.
- Provide family with a copy of most recent AA Plan.
- Can the child or parent identify triggers, appropriate usage of meds and when to initiate which med?

Date

Reviewer

Date

_____ Storage of medications

- Where are asthma meds stored
- Do the child have a spacer
- Can the parent (child) show good delivery technique?
- Check expiration dates