

Indoor Air Quality

Did you know that indoor air often has higher levels of toxins and pollutants than outdoor air?

How healthy is the air in your home? Much of your overall health can be improved by simply breathing **better air**. There are small things that you can do to help increase your air quality, which can make a big difference in the lives of yourself and your family.

Factors that contribute to poor indoor air quality:

- **Poor ventilation** is a major problem said to cause half of all indoor air problems.
- **Toxic fumes** are emitted from products found around the home. Be careful to avoid **volatile organic compounds (VOCs)** found in paint, stains, adhesives, carpet, cosmetics, cleaning fluids, and air fresheners. **Many fragrances also contain toxic chemicals** so limit the amount of cologne/perfume that you wear and reduce the amount of personal care products you use that contain the term "fragrance."

WHAT can I do?

- **Open a window** to help reduce indoor toxins in the air and run exhaust fans in the bathroom and kitchen.
- **Add houseplants** to decrease the amount of pollutants in the air and absorb harmful gases.
- **Switch to green and natural cleaning products.** Vinegar and baking soda have proven to be effective cleaners and deodorizers.
- **Eliminate smoking** in the home.
- **Avoid air fresheners and candles;** instead try safer alternatives such as fresh/dried flowers; spices such as cinnamon, clove, or orange; and essential oils such as lemon, eucalyptus, clary sage, and rose. Soy candles are also a better choice.
- **Test for radon, asbestos, and lead** and install a carbon monoxide detector.
- **Change your furnace/AC filters** every 3 months and vacuum carpets regularly (with a HEPA vacuum if you have one).

