

# HEALTHY, WEALTHY & WISE

MARCH 2016

Published exclusively for clients of Professional Carpet Systems

"Very often a change of self is needed more than a change of scene." – Arthur C. Benson

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HAPPY  
*St. Patrick's*  
DAY

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## Why do We Clean in Spring?

Have you ever wondered why we are annually seized by a sudden urge to air out the house, banish dust, organize closets, clean out cabinets, scrub floors, wash windows and organize our garages, attics and basements? It turns out there are biological, social and psychological reasons for the spring cleaning ritual... and that's a good thing.

### Biological Reasons

During winter, days are shorter and melatonin production (the hormone that produces drowsiness and enables us to fall asleep) is increased, making us want to relax and sleep more. Our mood tends to be more subdued and energy levels are lower. Housekeeping habits may slip. We spend more time indoors. Added indoor activities, coupled with the fact that we tend to keep doors and windows closed result in soil and contaminant build-up.

Then, the first day of spring comes in late March. When it arrives most of us are ready for the renewed energy and freshness that spring brings. Days get progressively longer and nights are shorter. The additional daylight suppresses production of melatonin.

The more daylight we are exposed to, the less melatonin we produce and the more alert, energetic and active we feel.

### Emotional Reasons

Once the winter doldrums pass, we become more aware of the less-than-ideal condition of our surroundings. The energy and optimism of spring prompts us to improve our environment. It's easier to be enthusiastic about cleaning and organizing in the springtime. You feel a sense of accomplishment upon completing a task. Your self-esteem increases. Endorphins are released into your body, increasing your sense of wellbeing.

In addition, you feel pride of ownership when your home is clean and organized, further improving your mood. Few things make you feel more positive than living in a home that is clean, fresh and neatly organized.

### Historical Reasons

The history of early America also provides a basis for the spring cleaning custom. In the winter, fireplaces, oil lamps and wood stoves created a fine

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## Easy Cilantro Lime Rice

*This recipe is a great spin-off on your conventional side dish of rice at dinner. The brown rice provides a nutritious, fiber-packed alternative to white rice, and the cilantro and the lime gives this dish an extra dash of delicious Mexican flavor.*

### Ingredients:

- 1/2 onion, chopped
- 1 [4 ounce] can green chilies
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1 lime, juiced
- 1/2 bunch cilantro, chopped
- 3 cups water
- 4 teaspoons chicken bouillon granules
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon butter, softened
- 3 cups uncooked instant rice

### Directions:

1. Blend the onion, green chiles, garlic, and lime juice together in a food processor until smooth; add the cilantro and pulse until the cilantro is finely chopped into the mixture.
2. Bring the water to boil in a saucepan. Stir the cilantro mixture, chicken bouillon granules, salt, butter, and rice into the water and return to a boil; reduce heat to medium-low and cover. Simmer until the rice has absorbed the liquid entirely, about 20 minutes.

*recipe courtesy allrecipes.com*

► *Continued from cover*

layer of oily soot, ashes and dust on floors, walls, ceilings, rugs and windows. As temperatures increased and days got longer, use of these heat and light sources decreased.

Spring was the perfect time to fling open windows and doors and clean everything. Rugs were beaten and aired out. Walls, ceilings and floors were swept and scrubbed. It's a tradition.

### Logical Reasons

Spring has always been a time of change. Americans tend to have two distinct wardrobes: one for warm weather and one for cool weather. Since closet space is limited, we often clean and organize closets this time of year.

The type of work and play activities change, so we put away winter toys and tools and get out the ones for warmer weather. Now we need to clean out and organize our garages, basements and attics. An organized home is more

efficient, resulting in less wasted time and frustration.

### Health Reasons

A clean home is a healthy home. Cleaning is the process of removing soils and contaminants from an environment or material. This results in better indoor air quality, a reduction of microbial growth and the added benefit that your carpet and other furnishings will last longer.

All of these biological, psychological and social reasons mean that we are basically hard-wired for spring cleaning. However, it is easy to become overwhelmed with all of the things you want to clean and organize. Don't try to do it all by yourself. Call Professional Carpet Systems to help you with the big jobs. Professional Carpet Systems is the smart choice to clean your carpets, upholstery and more. You'll spend less time feeling the joy of cleaning and more time enjoying the feeling of clean.

## Getting Ready for Spring Exercise

Many people spend most of the winter indoors, getting relatively little exercise. When warmer weather hits, everyone is ready to get up and outside to enjoy physical activity. With this comes increases in injuries during the spring months, when those who were sedentary during the winter jump right into strenuous outdoor exercise.

The key to preventing these types of injuries is to increase flexibility before engaging in exercise that requires extended ranges of motion. Gradually reestablish your routine, adding a new activity or more time to your workout each day. Warm up properly by stretching all of your muscles, reducing your chance of injury. You should also inspect your workout gear for excess wear and tear, especially shoes. If your shoes are worn or lacking in good support, you'll want to replace those before you begin a new exercise regimen.



Finally, don't be surprised if, even with proper stretching and equipment, you are sore after resuming your exercise routine. Ease into your workout and stop if you begin to feel pain. Let sore and tired muscles rest before pushing them to their limits again.



## Pets and Your Heart

Animals can find a special place in your heart. According to current research, they may also do your heart some good. Animals in the home offer some surprising health benefits. Researchers at the American Animal Hospital Association have found that pets improve the human condition, giving their owners lower blood pressure, heart rate, and anxiety levels. Pet owners also have lower levels of blood cholesterol and triglycerides in comparison to non-pet owners. Researchers at the University of California at Los Angeles have also found that Medicare patients who owned pets had fewer medical care visits than those who did not.



Pets also can have an effect on your mental health. People who have pets feel less loneliness and depression than those who do not. Pets offer more opportunities for outdoor activities and socialization, and they encourage you to get more exercise. They can improve your mood and reduce stress as well.

So if you have been considering welcoming an animal into your home, you can feel good about

not only caring for your pet, but about the benefits you will have as well. In fact, according to Dr. Edward Creagan, an oncologist at the Mayo Clinic, getting a pet is one of the easiest and most rewarding ways of living a longer and healthier life. Having a pet isn't for everyone, as there is additional work and responsibility from pet ownership. But for most people, the benefits of having a pet outweighs the drawbacks.

## How to Improve Your Credit Rating

You've run into it if you've ever applied for a car loan. It is essential information if you ever apply for a mortgage loan. Your credit rating is a very important key to your financial future. What if your credit isn't so great? There are some ways to improve your credit rating.

- Open and use a checking and savings account in your own name.
- Pay all your bills on time and use a personal check.
- Obtain a credit card, but keep your balance low.
- Remain at your place of employment for two years or longer.
- Avoid bankruptcies, tax liens, collections, and any bounced checks.
- Check your credit report annually and dispute any incorrect information.

Beware of credit repair clinics. They will often charge you for services that you can do yourself for free, and they cannot guarantee results. Re-establishing your credit doesn't happen overnight. But remember, the longer you practice good credit habits, the better your credit will be.



## Good Clean Funnies

### An Irish Proposal

A young Irish lad finally got around to proposing to his sweetheart, and he chose St. Patrick's Day to do it.

The lass proudly showed off the ring to everyone, including her father, who happened to be a jeweler. It only took a moment for her father to announce to her that it wasn't a real diamond.

The young girl stormed back to her fiancé and angrily berated him about his cheapness. "But darling," he protested, "I did that in honor of St. Patrick's Day. You see, I gave you a sham rock."



## Quick Tips

### Car Tip

After cleaning your car's fabric upholstery, protect them from further dirt and wear by applying a fabric protectant such as Scotchguard. Doing this not only protects the fabric, but makes it easier to clean the next time.

### Green Living Tip

The easiest and best way to cut water use in your home is to simply use less. Take shorter showers, make sure your clothes washer and dishwasher are full before running them, and turn off the faucet when you are brushing your teeth. You can also reduce water use outside by reducing the amount of grass in your yard. Replace those vegetation areas with plants and shrubs that require less water.

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## Win a FREE MONTH of Group Training from Fitness Together in Louisville!

Read this edition of Healthy, Wealthy & Wise to find the answer to the following trivia question:

**Longer daylight hours typically produce what effect in humans?**

- a. An increase in thyroid activity
- b. A reduction in appetite
- c. An decrease in melatonin production
- d. Spontaneous public singing

Once you've found the correct answer, email it to [anna@pcssuperior.com](mailto:anna@pcssuperior.com). At the end of the month, we will draw from the correct answers and someone will win this FREE MONTH of Group Training classes just in time for Spring!!

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*Contest Expires 3/31/2016.*

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