

HEALTHY, WEALTHY & WISE

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How to enjoy better air quality at home

Fall is a glorious time of year. The weather is getting a bit cooler and the days a bit shorter. If you are like most Americans, your family is spending more time indoors as the outdoor activities of summer wind down. That's why right now is a great time to think about your indoor air quality.

Air pollution is a major concern in the U.S., especially near heavily populated areas. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reports that indoor air is often 2 to 5 times more polluted than outdoor air. How can this be? And can you do anything to help?

The amount of air pollution in your home is affected by several factors and there are many sources of pollution. Some of these sources come from outside your home. Other sources come from inside. Some you can control; others you can't.

Outdoor pollutants and allergens enter your home by infiltration and ventilation, directly affecting the air in your home. Pollutants like car exhaust, pollen, smoke, insecticides, fertilizers and mold spores hitch a ride into your home on air currents, your clothing, shoes, hair and pets.

When these pollutants settle on surfaces outside, wind, rain and sunshine combine to neutralize, sweep and wash them away. Unfortunately, this is not the case inside your home. These same pollutants tend to accumulate inside your house on floors, furnishings, surfaces and in the air.

Because we live, eat, sleep, play and often work in our homes, we generate a significant amount of allergens and pollutants from inside our homes too. Did you know that you shed around a million dead skin cells every day? These dead cells are a food source for dust mites as well as other microbial life forms. Dust mite feces and dead dust mites are potent allergens and every home has millions of them. House pets also contribute to indoor air quality issues.

Then there are the sticky and oily residues from cooking gases that eventually settle on surfaces. Certain types of furniture, plastics and textiles also release gases that can affect indoor air quality. If you have a furnace that burns fuel such as gas, oil, or wood, by-products of combustion add to the problem.

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Spinach Stuffed Chicken Breasts

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1 (10 ounce) package frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 4 skinless, boneless chicken breasts
- 4 slices bacon

Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C).
2. In a medium bowl, mix mayonnaise, spinach, feta cheese, and garlic until well blended. Set aside.
3. Carefully butterfly chicken breasts, making sure not to cut all the way through. Spoon spinach mixture into chicken breasts. Wrap each with a piece of bacon, and secure with a toothpick. Place in shallow baking dish. Cover.
4. Bake in the preheated oven for 1 hour, or until chicken is no longer pink in the center and the juices run clear. An instant-read thermometer inserted into the center should read at least 165 degrees F (74 degrees C).

Tip

Aluminum foil can be used to keep food moist, cook it evenly, and make clean-up easier.

recipe courtesy allrecipes.com

Better air quality (continued from cover)

After all of this, you may wonder if it is safe to stay in your home. Don't be alarmed. There is a lot you can do to improve indoor air quality. Invest in high quality air filters for your HVAC (heat, ventilation, air-conditioning) system. These filters are rated based on their efficiency at trapping tiny particles. The rating is called MERV. The higher the MERV rating, the more effective the filter.

Professional duct cleaning helps to remove contaminants that accumulate on the inner surfaces of your HVAC system.

Use a vacuum cleaner equipped with HEPA filtration. HEPA filters trap the smallest particles including dust mite feces, dead skin, pollen and mold spores. Other vacuum cleaners simply spew these tiny particles back into the air, making matters worse.

Be prepared when disaster strikes

No part of the country is immune to natural or man-made disasters.

During September, the Department of Homeland Security joins with national, state, and local agencies to encourage Americans to prepare their homes for disasters of all kinds.

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), engaging citizens in disaster preparedness is a critical first step in effective response and recovery efforts.

In other words, if you know what to do when a disaster is predicted, what to do when it occurs, and what to do afterward, you will be in a better position to save yourself and your home before help arrives.

While there are obvious differences in preparing for a hurricane and preparing for a forest fire, there are similarities in preparedness for all types of disasters. You should know where you will go to escape, what your mode of transportation will be, and when you should leave. (It's never a good idea to

Use bathroom exhaust fans and range hoods to remove excessive humidity and cooking gases that can contribute to indoor air pollution. High humidity encourages bacteria and mold growth.

Cleaning carpets, upholstery, and area rugs returns them to a healthful condition and improves indoor air quality by removing pollutants and allergens that bond to these surfaces.

Cleaning your carpets, rugs and upholstery right now makes perfect sense. You are going to be spending more time indoors. You and your family deserve a clean, healthy home. If you have guests visiting for the holidays, your home will look, smell and feel fresh and clean.

Call Professional Carpet Systems today to schedule your fall cleaning. You and your family will breathe easier.



Learn about being prepared for disaster at [ready.gov/make-a-plan](https://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan)

let your car be almost out of gas.)

Assemble important documents to take with you including copies of insurance policies, identification, and bank account numbers. Use a waterproof container and include some cash.

It may not be necessary to leave your home. Do what you can in advance of a storm or earthquake to make it safer. Remember the basics of survival: water, food, clean air, and warmth.

Consider the amount of water and non-perishable food your family will need to stay in place without power for at least three or four days. Always have extra batteries for portable radios. Also have a backup battery for cellphones.

Ways to stay healthy with a desk job

Physical inactivity, especially sitting for long periods, has been linked to increased mortality rates second only to smoking, according to research from the American College of Sports Medicine.

For those that reported sitting for more than 23 hours per week combined, there was a 64 percent greater chance of dying from cardiovascular disease than those who said less than 11. The American College of Chest Physicians even found a link between sitting at home during leisure time and suffering poorer sleep and decreased attentiveness during work the next day.

Although it is impossible to negate the effects of long hours of sitting entirely, there are many things that the average worker can do to help, according to Lifehack. First, plan to break up the day into 30-to-60 minute chunks, separated by a short walk, stretch, or other activity. Finding ways to walk at work could be as simple as having a walking meeting or bringing in a standing desk or even a cutting-edge treadmill desk. There are simple stretching routines that can be performed unobtrusively in an office that can reduce neck and back pain by 72 percent, according to studies at the Wheeling Jesuit University.

Don't forget Grandparents Day

Each year, the second Sunday in September is recognized as Grandparents Day. This year, it's on the 10th. It's the time to give them a card or gift, to visit, or to call them on the telephone.

For adult grandchildren, grandparents can be great sources of information. They've lived life and learned many things. Their knowledge and experience is a valuable asset you can draw from. Sometimes they can make just a simple statement that's loaded with the truth.

Today's grandparents are young. The average age for first-time grandparents today is about 48. While that may seem infinitely aged to kids and young



If you sit at a desk all day, don't forget that some type of daily exercise is the key to good health.

Good practices like parking far away from the office, taking the stairs instead of the elevator, or even walking or biking for your commute can add movement to the day. Take care to schedule lunchtime so that you won't be forced to grab unhealthy food or eat sitting at your desk instead of taking a real break. Drinking plenty of water will not only provide other health benefits, but it will also give you a reason to stand up and move around more often as you go to the restroom and refill your bottle. After work, several health-minded coworkers could even get together for athletics or group workouts as an alternative to sitting at home.



September 9 is Grandparents Day. Let them know how much you love them.

adults, those grandparents, unlike the oldsters of yore, are still busy and in the workforce. For kids, it is probably the great-grandparents who have lived the longest and now have time to teach and reminisce.

Good Clean Funnies

Spanish Magician

A Spanish magician tells the audience he will disappear on the count of 3.

He says: "Uno, dos...."*POOF!!*

He disappeared without a tres.

Science

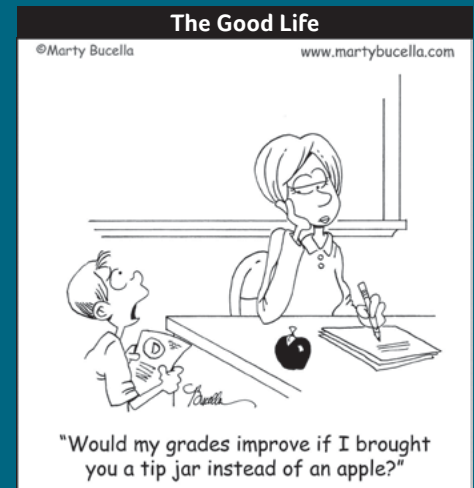
There was once a police atom who ran into a suspect atom.

As they looked at each other the police atom said, "I've got my ion you!"

Blush

Why were the tomatoes in the fridge embarrassed?

They saw the salad dressing.



Moneywise

Financial wellness benefit

Although more than 80 percent of employers have plans to offer financial wellness benefits, many employees are not taking advantage of the opportunities they present, according to Forbes. These programs provide services like one-on-one coaching, workshops, webcasts, and online support discussion groups to help provide direction for workers at every stage of their life and career for retirement, savings, and healthcare.

Research on participants in these programs, carried out by Financial Finesse, showed that they were twice as likely to be on course for retirement, better insured, financially healthier overall, and only half as likely to experience unmanageable financial stress compared to those that didn't take advantage of the benefit.

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Win a \$25 Restaurant Gift Card!

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

MERV is a rating of the:

- a. effectiveness of an air filter
- b. level of contamination on a surface
- c. efficiency of a cleaning agent
- d. popularity of a talk show host

Once you've found the correct answer, email it to anna@pcssuperior.com. At the end of the month, we will draw from the correct answers and someone will win a \$25 restaurant gift card!

Contest Expires 9/30/2018.



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