



COLUMBUS
HEALTHYHOMES



TIPS

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BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE CITY OF COLUMBUS HOUSING DIVISION



Rent or Own? Here Are Easy, Inexpensive Things You Can Do to Prevent Breathing Problems, Burns, Poisonings and Other Injuries at Home.

Guard Against Asthma & Allergies

- Never smoke in the house, car or around children.
- Clean or replace your furnace and air conditioner filter often.
- Don't use air fresheners, potpourri, incense, scented candles, a fireplace or wood burning stove if anyone has breathing problems.
- Wash stuffed animals and other toys in hot water to prevent dust mites.

Prevent Injuries

- Set hot water heater temperature at 120° or lower to avoid burns.
- Avoid falls by keeping stairs, porches and railings in good repair. Use non-skid throw rugs and a no slip surface in the tub.
- Keep poisons locked away from children. Keep the poison control number 1-800-222-1222 handy.
- Install smoke detectors on every floor. Check monthly to be sure they're working.
- Cover electrical outlets so kids can't get shocked.

Keep Bugs and Mice Away

- Wash bedding weekly in hot water to reduce dust mites.
- Make sure everyone eats at the table and wipe up food spills and crumbs right away.
- Clean dirty dishes right after eating. Don't leave dishwater in the sink overnight.
- Get rid of newspapers, bags, and cardboard boxes that make good homes for pests. Recycle them if you can.
- Teach your children not to share combs, hats, or coats. That's how lice spread.
- Store food and trash in tightly sealed containers. Empty trash often.
- Use safe pest control practices. Use cockroach baits and gels, mouse and rat snap traps. Seal cracks and holes where pests are getting in.



Prevent Lead Poisoning

- If your home was built before 1978, it could have lead-based paint. Keep painted surfaces in good repair so kids don't accidentally swallow leaded paint chips. Wash toys weekly. Wipe windowsills, inside window frames, floors and other surfaces weekly to keep lead dust from forming and being inhaled. Make sure everyone who works on your home uses lead-safe practices. Ask your doctor to test children under age 6 for lead poisoning.

Protect Against Chemicals & Gases

- Test your home for deadly Radon gas, which can cause lung cancer.
- Ask stores to air out new carpets and furniture before bringing them home to keep out chemical odors.
- Open windows to let in fresh air and use exhaust fans when cooking or using paint or chemicals in the house/garage.
- Faulty ovens and heaters can cause deadly carbon monoxide gas. Put carbon monoxide alarms on each floor.
- Open a window every day to let air pollution out and fresh air in.

Stop Damp, Stop Mold & Mildew

- Fix plumbing leaks and holes so rainwater and snow don't cause mold and mildew growth.
- A dehumidifier can help keep basements dry and mold-free.
- Keep wall-to-wall carpets, which can get moldy, out of areas that get wet like basements and bathrooms.
- Don't refinish basements without controlling moisture first.
- Routinely check and clean gutters to help keep water away from your home's foundation.
- Vent your dryer outside to keep mold and mildew from growing inside.
- Wear protective gloves, an N95 respirator and let in fresh air when cleaning up mold. Avoid using bleach. Soap and water will effectively clean hard surfaces.

Clean Often

- Damp mop, dust and vacuum weekly to prevent dust and pet hair from causing breathing problems. Minimize the use of harsh products. Soap, water and vinegar work well. Look for "green" certified products to use. Go green when possible.
- Wash children's hands, bottles, pacifiers and toys often to reduce germs and keep them mold-free.
- If your pet goes outside, use non-toxic flea prevention products: long lasting pills or topical insecticide. Also control fleas with a flea comb, flea traps, by vacuuming floors and by washing pets and their bedding weekly if needed.
- Use inside and outside doormats to keep dirt outside.



For more Healthy Homes information, visit www.hud.gov/offices/lead/hhi/