Indoor Air Quality

Poor indoor air quality can cause a stuffy nose, sore throat, coughing or wheezing, headache, burning eyes, or skin rash. People with asthma or other breathing problems or who have allergies may have severe reactions.

Common Indoor Air Pollutants

Poor indoor air quality comes from many sources, including:

- » Tobacco smoke
- » Mold
- » Pollen
- » Allergens such as those from cats, dogs, mice, dust mites, and cockroaches
- » Smoke from fireplaces and woodstoves
- » Formaldehyde in building materials, textiles, and furniture
- » Carbon monoxide from gas furnaces, ovens, and other appliances
- » Use of household products such as cleaners and bug sprays
- » Outdoor air pollution from factories, vehicles, wildfires, and other sources

How to Improve Indoor Air Quality

- » Open windows to let in fresh air.
  - • However, if you have asthma triggered by outdoor air pollution or pollen, opening windows might not be a good idea. In this case, use exhaust fans and non-ozone-producing air cleaners to reduce exposure to these triggers.
- » Clean often to get rid of dust, pet fur, and other allergens.
  - • Use a vacuum cleaner equipped with a HEPA filter.
  - • Wet or damp mopping is better than sweeping.
- » Take steps to control mold and pests.
- » Do not smoke, and especially do not smoke indoors.
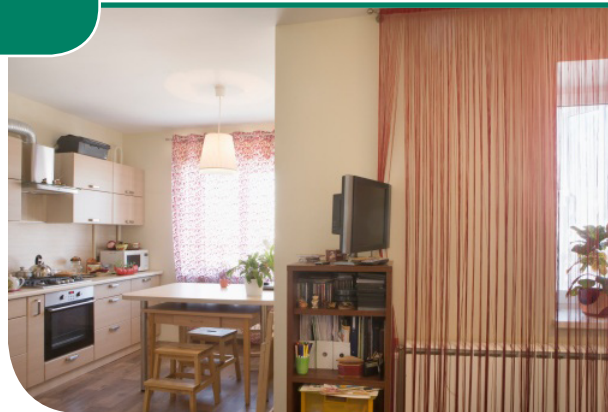
If you think poor indoor air is making you sick, please see or call a doctor or other health care provider.

About CDC

CDC is a federal public health agency based in Atlanta, GA. Our mission is to promote health and quality of life by preventing and controlling disease, injury and disability.

For More Information

We want to help you to stay healthy. If you would like more information about indoor air quality and health please call us toll-free at **1-800-CDC-INFO.**

National Center for Environmental Health

Division of Environmental Hazards and Health Effects