

INDOOR AIR



Indoor Air is the air that everyone breathes while inside your home. Tobacco smoke, asthma triggers, carbon monoxide and radon can cause this air to become harmful.

TOBACCO SMOKE

► What is tobacco smoke?

- A mixture of chemicals in the smoke that is given off by the burning of a cigarette, pipe or cigar

► How is tobacco smoke harmful?

- Tobacco smoke contains more than 4,000 chemical substances, 40 of them are known to cause cancer. A person standing or sitting by a smoker breathes these chemicals into their lungs.

► What happens if a child is around tobacco smoke?

- ear infections may increase ● asthma attacks may be triggered ● lung function may decrease

► Where is tobacco smoke found in your home?

- tobacco smoke from cigarettes, cigars or pipes can be found anywhere near or around smokers

► What should you do if there is tobacco smoke in your home?

- Don't smoke around children ● Ask visitors to smoke outside

► Did you know?

- The smoke of only 10 cigarettes per day may increase a child's chances of getting asthma

ASTHMA TRIGGERS

► What are asthma triggers?

- Asthma triggers are usually small pieces of animal skin, mold, dust mites and cockroaches in the air that cause allergies. Some fumes from household products can also be asthma triggers

► What are the effects of asthma triggers?

- Asthma triggers can cause asthma attacks

► What is an asthma attack?

- Difficulty in breathing ● Tight feeling in your chest ● Wheezing sounds while breathing

► What can cause allergies in your home?

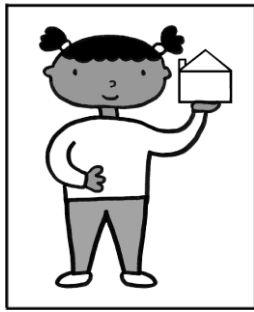
- dust ● mold and mildew in damp places ● tobacco smoke from cigarettes, cigars and pipes ● fumes from household products ● perfumes and hair sprays ● animal skin

► What should you do if there are asthma triggers in your home?

- Wash all bedding every week in water that is at least 130°F, to kill dust mites
- Open windows and/or use fans when using cleaning products or heaters that give off fumes
- Wash moldy areas with a bleach solution (1 cup bleach in 1 gallon of water)
- Get rid of cockroaches if you find them

► Did you know?

- 4.8 million children have asthma.
- Asthma is the leading cause of missed school and emergency room visits
- Asthma can be controlled or managed, but not cured



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CARBON MONOXIDE

- ▶ **What is carbon monoxide?**
 - An odorless, colorless gas that comes from burning kerosene, coal, oil or wood
- ▶ **What is carbon monoxide poisoning?**
 - Poisoning happens when carbon monoxide replaces oxygen in the blood
 - The percentage of carbon monoxide is measured in the blood for signs of poisoning
 - 30%= headache, tiredness ● 40%= confusion ● 60%= loss of consciousness ● 80%= death
- ▶ **What happens if a child breathes carbon monoxide?**
 - Flu and cold like symptoms ● Blurred vision ● Stomach aches
 - Trouble breathing ● Sleepiness ● Ringing in the ears
- ▶ **Where is carbon monoxide found in your home?**
 - faulty gas water heaters and furnaces ● unventilated space heaters
 - clothes dryers ● tobacco smoke ● fuels in wood and gas stoves
- ▶ **What should you do to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning in your home?**
 - Use carbon monoxide detectors in your home
 - Use the correct fuel in space heaters, and if it is a kerosene heater crack open a window
 - Never use ovens or gas ranges to heat your home
 - Open flues when fireplaces are used
 - Never burn charcoal inside your home or garage
 - Keep gas appliances in good working order
- ▶ **Did you know?**
 - Unborn children, infants, elderly, and people with heart and breathing problems are at high risk for poisoning from carbon monoxide.

RADON

- ▶ **What is radon?**
 - An odorless and tasteless cancer-causing gas, coming from soil and rock underneath your home
- ▶ **What is radon poisoning?**
 - Poisoning happens when you breathe air that contains radon
 - Poisonous levels are levels measured at 2 and 4 pCi/L (picoCuries per liter of air)
- ▶ **What happens if someone is poisoned by radon?**
 - Lung and tissue damage ● Cancer (not everyone will get cancer, but smokers are at higher risk)
- ▶ **Where is radon found in and around your home?**
 - Radon leaks in through cracks in walls and floors ● Some building materials
- ▶ **What should you do if you think you have radon in your home?**
 - Buy a low-cost, do-it-yourself radon test kit found in most hardware stores
 - Seal cracks in floors and walls in your basement
- ▶ **Did you know?**
 - All homes with basements should be tested for radon
 - Radon is estimated to cause about 14,000 deaths per year