



Healthy Homes Training

CONTAMINANTS



Why Parents Should Worry about Contaminants

- Contaminants produce fumes harmful to a child's health.
- Some contaminants can cause allergies, skin rashes and asthma attacks.
- Reducing use of household cleaning chemicals is one way to reduce illness in children.



Asthma & Allergy Triggers

- Mold
- Pests/Pesticides
- Household cleaning products
- Dust
- Pollen
- Dander from pets
- Cigarette smoke
- Personal care products



How Safe IS Your Home?

Common contaminants that can be dangerous:

- Bleach
- Glues
- Rat and mouse poison
- Mothballs
- Lighter fluid
- Air fresheners
- Oven Cleaner
- Batteries
- Gas
- Tobacco
- Smoke
- Oil
- Wood polish
- Toilet and drain cleaners
- Shoe polish
- Pesticides
- Ammonia
- Lead
- Carbon Monoxide
- And many others



Presentation Goals

- Learn what harmful contaminants may be in your home.
- Identify words that indicate potential hazard.
- Learn safe cleaning practices that do not involve contaminants.
- Know where carbon monoxide exists in homes.
- Learn importance of a blood test for lead.



7 Principles of Healthy Homes



1. Keep it **CONTAMINANT-FREE**
2. Keep it **CLEAN**
3. Keep it **DRY**
4. Keep it **PEST-FREE**
5. Keep it **SAFE**
6. Keep it **MAINTAINED**
7. Keep it **VENTILATED**



When Household Chemicals Become Hazardous

- Children can be poisoned by breathing in or drinking products that are not used, stored or thrown away safely.
- Combining cleaning products can create harmful vapors.
- Chemicals used in a non-ventilated area are hazardous.



Exposure To Contaminants

- **Some household chemicals can cause:**
 - Nausea
 - Dizziness
 - Itching or burning skin
 - Sore or watery eyes
- **Long-term problems:**
 - Cancer and lung damage can occur later in life



Carbon Monoxide



Carbon Monoxide (CO) can come from: cigarette smoke, wood burning fireplaces/stoves, ovens, clothes dryers and kerosene heaters.



- You can't see or smell CO.
- Signs of CO poisoning are mistaken for the flu.
- People who survive CO poisoning can suffer brain damage, lose their sight or hearing, or have heart problems.



Preventing CO Exposure



- Do not breathe in the fumes from anything burning.
- Do not smoke in your home.
- Install CO alarms near every sleeping area.



Lead

- Lead is mainly found today in homes built before 1978:
 - Lead-based paint
 - Lead solder/lead pipes
- Children can get poisoned by inhaling or swallowing lead dust.
- Lead can cause brain damage, behavior problems, short attention spans and lower intelligence levels.



Preventing Lead Exposure

- Homes built before 1978 should be tested for lead.
 - If you do not know when your home was built or you need help, contact your local health department.
- Have your child tested for lead poisoning at age 1 and 2; or before age 6 if child was never tested.



Preventing Lead Exposure



- Give your children foods high in:
 - Calcium (cheese, milk)
 - Vitamin C (citrus fruit)
 - Iron (black beans, beef or peanut butter)
- Wash hands often

These foods help prevent lead poisoning



Bleach



Using bleach full strength can cause allergy and asthma attacks in children.

- Bleach should be diluted. Do not use full strength.
- Using more bleach than needed produces dangerous fumes.
- The correct mix of bleach to water is:
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of bleach to 4 cups of water
- Never mix bleach with anything other than water.



Air Fresheners



Reed diffuser

Scented Candle

Plug-in air freshener



- Air fresheners cause allergies and other breathing problems in children.
- Examples of air fresheners are:
 - Scented sprays
 - Scented candles
 - Plug-in air fresheners
 - Scented gel beads and cones
 - Reed diffusers
 - Incense
 - Scented cleaners



Contaminant Safety



**Open a window or run a fan
when cleaning with chemicals.**

- Follow the directions on household products—always use the amounts shown on the package.
- Open a window when cleaning.



Read Product Labels Carefully

CAUTION



POISON



FLAMMABLE



Take extra care if you see these words on the label!

- Caution
- Warning
- Flammable
- Harmful
- Danger
- Poison



Contaminant Safety

- Keep children away from the area where you are working.
 - Children can breathe in or drink poisonous products.
- Never mix cleaning products unless the label says it is safe to do so.
- Keep toxins away from heat, sparks and fire.
- Be ready in case there is an accident:

Poison Control Center 1-800-222-1222



Safe Disposal of Contaminants

- Take unused toxins to a community hazardous waste site.
- Never dump or burn hazardous products on your property.
- Never burn hazardous products in your home.
- Recycle used motor oil and antifreeze.
- Call your township or waste recycling center for more help.



Non-Chemical Cleaning



- Use non-chemical cleaning in your home:
 - Use a plunger instead of chemicals for clogged drains.
 - Use baking soda as a scrubbing agent.
 - Use white vinegar as a grease cutter.
- Non-chemical cleaning saves money.



Non-chemical Cleaning Recipes



Using non-chemical cleaning products reduces allergy and asthma symptoms and saves money.

- **Oven Cleaner**
 - 1 cup of baking soda
 - Water
- **All-Purpose Spray Cleaner**
 - 2 tablespoons vinegar
 - 1 tablespoon baking soda
 - 2 cups water
- **Window and Glass Spray Cleaner**
 - 3 tablespoons white vinegar
 - ½ teaspoon dish detergent
 - 2 cups water



Conclusion

- Some contaminants in homes can cause allergy or asthma issues.
- Be sure to read labels carefully prevent emergencies.
- Home-made cleaners work just as well as store-bought chemicals.



Resources

Your landlord or local health department

Consumer Products Safety Commission • 1-800-638-2772 • www.cpsc.gov

EPA's Consumer Labeling Initiative • <http://www.epa.gov>

Healthy Indoor Air for America's Homes • 406-994-3451 • www.healthyindoorair.org

Home*A*Syst Handbook • 608-262-0024 • www.uwex.edu/homeasyst

New Jersey Quitline • 1-866-NJSTOPS • njquitline.org

www.leadsafekids.org

