

# Healthy Home Cleaning Habits

## Exchange Indoor Air

Many modern homes are so tight there's little new air coming in. Open the windows from time to time or run any installed exhaust fans. In cold weather, the most efficient way to exchange room air is to open the room wide - windows and doors, and let fresh air in quickly for about 5 minutes. The furnishings in the room, and the walls, act as 'heat sinks', and by exchanging air quickly, this heat is retained.

## Minimize Dust

Remove clutter which collects dust, such as old newspapers and magazines. Try to initiate a 'no-shoes-indoors' policy. If you're building or remodelling a home, consider a central vacuum system; this eliminates the fine dust which portable vacuum cleaners recirculate.

## Use Cellulose Sponges

Most household sponges are made of polyester or plastic which are slow to break down in landfills, and many are treated with triclosan, a chemical that can produce chloroform (a suspected carcinogen) when it interacts with the chlorine found in tap water. Instead try cellulose sponges, available at natural foods stores, which are biodegradable and will soak up spills faster since they're naturally more absorbent. For general household cleaning, try Skoy Eco-Cleaning Cloths. These cleaning cloths are non-toxic, extremely absorbent (15x paper towels), reusable, and biodegradable.

## Keep Bedrooms Clean

Most time at home is spent in the bedrooms. Keep pets out of these rooms, especially if they spend time outdoors.

## Use Gentle Cleaning Products

Of the various commercial home cleaning products, drain cleaners, toilet bowl cleaners and oven cleaners are the most toxic. Use the formulas described above or purchase 'green' commercial alternatives. Avoid products containing ammonia or chlorine, or petroleum-based chemicals; these contribute to respiratory irritation, headaches and other complaints.

## Clean from the Top Down:

When house cleaning, save the floor or carpet for last. Allow time for the dust to settle before vacuuming.