



A healthy home is well ventilated

A well-ventilated home provides fresh air.

The main idea

Most people spend most of their time indoors. But indoor air often contains unhealthy chemicals from household products (such as cleaning supplies), furnaces, and other devices. Bringing fresh air into the home helps to remove or dilute these chemicals and makes breathing healthier.

How it affects your health

Chemicals from household products may have various health effects. In a home that is poorly ventilated, poor air quality may

- Make allergy or asthma symptoms worse
- Make your eyes red, and make your nose and throat burn
- Make you feel tired and give you headaches often
- Allow mold to grow because of too much moisture

How to know if you have a problem

- You see or smell mold, fumes, smoke, or strong or unpleasant smells
- Surfaces are very dusty
- Heating and air conditioner filters and vents are dirty or clogged with dust
- Clothes dryer is not vented to outside
- Exhaust fans in bathrooms or kitchen are missing, not working, or not vented to outside

How to fix the problem

- Do not allow smoking in the home
- Open windows whenever possible
- In bathrooms and kitchens, use exhaust fans that are vented outside
- Do not use aerosol sprays, scented candles, and air fresheners
- Choose household products—like safer paints, adhesives, and wood items—that do not give off dangerous gases
- Clean heating and air conditioner vents, and replace filters regularly
- Vent all appliances that burn fuel to the outside
- Have furnace, hot water heater, gas appliances, and fireplace or woodstove checked every year by qualified professionals
- Test for radon, a natural gas that causes lung cancer, and if needed, install systems to reduce radon
- Consider indoor air quality if you make your home more energy efficient

How to learn more

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, *Homeowner's Guide to Ventilation*, http://www.nchh.org/Portals/0/Contents/Homeowners_Guide_to_Ventilation.pdf
- U.S. Department of Energy, *Guide to Home Ventilation*, http://www1.eere.energy.gov/buildings/openhouse/pdfs/ventilation_factsheet16.pdf

For more information, call the Connecticut Department of Public Health's Healthy Homes Initiative at 860-509-7299, see www.ct.gov/dph/healthyhomes, or call Infoline at 2-1-1