

Better Air Quality, Better Health

Have you ever wondered how the quality of the air you breathe impacts your health?

For example, maybe you have dealt with unexplained allergy symptoms and found out later that your house had a mold problem. Whether you can easily detect it or not, poor air quality can significantly impact your health. Read on and arm yourself with knowledge by finding out more about common causes for poor air quality and what you can do to prevent them.

What Causes Poor Air Quality

- smog and soot
- vehicle exhaust fumes
- exhaust from industrial factories & plants
- pollen and mold
- bacteria and viruses
- carbon monoxide
- cleaning supplies & household chemicals
- mold and dampness
- secondhand smoke
- hazardous air pollutants (lead, dioxins, benzene)

Prevention Tips

Clean your house regularly

A consistent routine of cleaning your house is an essential step in addressing irritants in the air like dust, pet dander, mold, etc. Vacuum carpets once or twice a week, and wash bedding regularly. Don't overlook the importance of using toxin-free cleaning supplies.

According to the [American Lung Association](#), some products release dangerous chemicals known as volatile organic compounds (VOCs). Ammonia and bleach are also harmful ingredients. VOCs and other toxic substances have been known to contribute to allergic reactions, respiratory problems, and headaches.

Use an air purifier

There may be times when you can't fully control the source of poor air quality. In this case, it may be worth it to invest in an air purifier. Place them in highly used areas of the home.

While this fix won't take care of the root of the problem, it will help cut down on the irritation caused by it.

Open doors & windows to let fresh air in

Toxic odors and air contaminants will linger in closed rooms and spaces because the air can't escape. This can be a problem, especially during the winter months when, often, we spend more time inside keeping doors and windows closed. It's a good practice to open windows and doors once in a while, even during the winter months, to allow fresh air to flow through your house.

Take alternative modes of transportation to work.

Particularly in city environments, vehicle exhaust fumes contribute to air pollution, releasing high levels of carbon monoxide, which is the largest pollutant in the U.S. today, states [The European Business Review](#). So, if your commute is within a reasonable distance, taking alternative modes of travel such as walking, biking, or public transportation is one way to make a difference.

Compost leaves and garden waste

[Solana Center for Environmental Innovation](#) suggests that composting things like food scraps and leaves improve air quality by preventing those things from being tossed into a landfill. It also prevents organic waste from releasing a greenhouse gas called Methane into the landfill. If used in a garden or flowerbed, the newly composted materials improve the soil structure and help prevent weed build-up. Plants grown in composted soils tend to be healthier, more resistant to pests and diseases, and require less watering. So, consider creating compost with your food scraps and leaves and enjoy the benefits of compost rather than tossing them into a landfill.