



Prescriptions for PREVENTION

Guidance from the Western States
Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit



Indoor Air Pollutants



Did you know?

Indoor air pollution comes from many different sources, like building materials, furnishings, and activities at home which may produce gases, particles, and other substances. Potential health effects include increased risk of asthma, heart disease, cancer, and developmental issues.



Do

- Clean regularly using wet microfiber cloths and mops or vacuums with HEPA filters
- Ensure good ventilation by opening windows or using fans on good air days, especially during cooking or cleaning
- Make your own household cleaning products with vinegar and dish soap or choose those on the [EPA Safer Choice list](#)
- Regularly service your furnace and air conditioner (HVAC). Use MERV13 or higher-rated air filters and replace them every 3 months
 - "MERV" and a number 1-20 is labeled on filter packaging, or just add "MERV 13" when you search for filters online
- Consider purchasing a [portable HEPA air cleaner](#). A lower-cost alternative can be to make a [DIY air filter](#). Replace filters every 3-6 months.
- [Test your home for radon](#).
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) detectors. Replace batteries as needed.



Don't

- Don't smoke or vape indoors or in vehicles. Wash your hands after smoking
- Don't open your windows when outdoor air pollution is high - see [Air Quality Index](#)
- Don't burn anything indoors (including incense, candles, or wood)
- Don't open your gas oven to heat your home
- Don't use air fresheners or fragranced products
- Don't ignore leaks and moisture levels or allow parts of your home to remain damp for over 48 hours. These may result in growth of [mold or mildew](#).
- Don't buy a new gas stove. If you can replace your stove, choose convection or electric. Make sure to use a hood fan or ventilation while cooking and use the back burners.



For more information, scan the code or visit

<https://wspehsu.ucsf.edu/curriculum-tools/prescriptions-for-prevention/>

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