

# Better Breathing

A publication of  
Breathe California  
of the Bay Area

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## Coping with Indoor Air Pollution

Source: American Association of Respiratory Care, [YourLungHealth.org](http://YourLungHealth.org)

Indoor air pollution is irritating to everyone, but people who have respiratory problems are even more sensitive to indoor pollutants and prone to developing complications. As we spend more time indoors during the winter months, it becomes especially important to be aware of what indoor pollutants might be affecting your home. Listed here are some common irritants found in the home and some tips for decreasing or even eliminating them.

### Tobacco smoke

Make sure family members and guests know that you don't allow smoking inside your home. If someone does want to smoke, kindly ask them to step outside to your yard or porch.

### Fumes

Your kitchen, bathroom, and any work area where fumes may accumulate are good places to install exhaust fans. Remember to open a window whenever you are staying in these areas for any length of time and to clean the fans periodically. If you use a gas water heater, get someone to inspect it regularly. Check the pilot lights on your gas stove, and make sure that gas flames are burning blue. Also, be sure to check your furniture, carpet, upholstery, and draperies for evidence of any pungent odors that may be emanating from them.

### Dust and dirt

Appliances have many parts that collect dust and other indoor irritants, so give them a thorough cleaning as often as needed. Be sure to include these parts when cleaning: heat exchangers, dryer filters, coils on the refrigerator, water pans under the refrigerator, furnaces and ducts. Also, clean or replace air conditioner and heater filters often.

### Aerosol products

Aerosol products can be irritating for some lung disease patients. So, use roll-on deodorants and non-aerosol pump sprays. If an air freshener is needed, use a "solid" type product.

### Household chemical cleaners

Use baking soda or vinegar and water as household cleaners. For a job that absolutely requires a chemical, let someone else do the cleaning. Don't use pesticides indoors; assign this chore to others (or hire a professional exterminator) and be sure to leave the house for the recommended period of time.

### Poor air circulation

Keep the doors to all rooms open to allow for proper circulation. Open a window for a few minutes several times a day during the winter and leave a window slightly open during

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## Have You Heard....???

A law was just passed that allows anyone who will be 70½ at the time of contribution to donate up to \$100,000 per year in 2006 and 2007 from an IRA or Roth IRA to a qualified public charity, like Breathe California, with no federal tax consequences.

What's more, these donations will count as part of your required minimum distribution!

This new exception for donations can greatly benefit individuals who want to avoid paying taxes or being pushed into a higher tax bracket when making their minimum annual IRA distribution.

Have questions? Want more information? Simply contact us at learn more about how you might be able to meet your minimum IRA deduction and avoid a tax hit by making a donation from your IRA today!

Contact Steve French at (408) 998-5865 or [steve@lungsrus.org](mailto:steve@lungsrus.org) to learn more about this new opportunity today!

## Coping with Indoor Air Pollution...

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the summer. Ceiling fans are a good way to increase circulation, but don't forget to clean them regularly.

### Fireplaces

Don't use your fireplace as the main source of heat in your home.

Whenever using the fireplace, make sure the damper is open and that the chimney is cleaned periodically.

Burn only firewood in your fireplace - never burn paper or charcoal.

### Mold and mildew

If you have tiles in your bathroom, wash and replace grout frequently. Check anyplace that moisture accumulates. In cellars, basements, and garages, waterproof the cement floors. In your kitchen and bathroom, use sheet vinyl instead of vinyl squares for the floor.

## Respiratory equipment

When you breathe with the help of this kind of equipment (compressors, oxygen concentrators, etc.), you run the risk of breathing in dust as well as any germs that might be growing there. Clean all equipment thoroughly and frequently. This includes cleaning any filters that might be a part of the equipment. Clean medicine nebulizers after each use by using one-part white vinegar to three-parts water. Let the pieces air-dry thoroughly on a clean towel before using them again.

Hang all tubes up to dry, and keep oxygen cannulas clean and free of debris by cleaning them in the same manner as your nebulizers. Replace your cannulas every two to four weeks (or more often if needed). Be sure to consult with your provider if you have questions about any of your home respiratory equipment.

## Quit Smoking for Good This New Year!

Every January, countless smokers make a New Year Resolution to kick the habit. And considering the impact tobacco smoke can have on those with lung disease, no resolution could be more important for lung disease patients and family members who still smoke. So, to help these individuals start 2007 smoke-free, Breathe California will be bringing its Ash Kickers stop-smoking classes throughout the Bay Area this January. The 7-session class offers its participants strategies, resources and group support as they start down the path to a fuller and healthier life. This January, Ash Kickers classes will be held:

**Mountain View:** Thursdays, Jan 11 - Feb 15 @ El Camino Hospital

**San Jose:** Thursdays, Jan 11 - Feb 15 @ O'Connor Hospital

**Palo Alto:** Tuesdays, Jan 16 - Feb 20 @ Avenidas Senior Center

**Gilroy:** Wednesdays, Jan 24 - Feb 28 @ St Louise Regional Hospital

*For more information or to sign up, call Breathe California at (408) 998-5865.*

## In the News

Each month, we are proud to bring you some of the latest news affecting lung disease patients. You can also find more news briefs and articles online by visiting:

[www.lungsrus.org](http://www.lungsrus.org)

Click on the News link from the menu bar to reach our newsroom. From there, you can view individual articles by clicking on the "News Briefs" link.

From the Newsroom, you can also read about the agency's latest work in the community. Click on the "Agency News" link to view our latest articles and press releases.

*The following news briefs have been summarized from external sources and have been placed here solely to inform you of the latest in lung health news. Breathe California does not endorse their findings nor have they verified their accuracy.*

## Exercise May Offer Some Lung Cancer Protection

MSNBC.com, November 12, 2006

According to the Associated Press, new research shows that exercise may help smokers reduce their likelihood of developing lung cancer. While the researchers stressed that smoking remained by far the largest and strongest cause of the disease, they discovered that exercise may help lower the risk for lung cancer as well.

The research was conducted through a study of information collected through the Iowa Women's Health Study, which followed 42,000 older women from 1986 to 2002, 777 of whom had or developed lung cancer. The researchers found that smokers who worked out had a 35 percent lower risk of developing the disease than smokers who were not very active. Among the exercising

smokers, the lowest risk was found among those who undertook moderate workouts more than four times a week or vigorous workouts two or more times a week. However, the data also showed that those who had quit smoking were 10 to 11 times less likely to develop lung cancer than any smoker.

"The most important thing that smokers can do to reduce the risk of lung cancer is to quit smoking," said lead author Dr. Kathryn Shmitz, stressing that exercise does not give women a free pass to smoke. The researchers also noted that the level of activity among the women studied was also linked to other health factors (such as their weight), which may have a more significant correlation to one's lung cancer risk.

## Drop in National Smoking Rates Stall

Health Day News, November 26, 2006

For the first time in seven years, the nation's adult smoking rate did not drop, suggesting the possible need to step up tobacco control efforts. According to the CDC's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, just under 21% of adults smoked in 2005, matching the 2004 rate. In addition, the youth smoking rate actually increased by 1% during the same time period.

"After years of progress, what we are seeing is no change in adult prevalence of smoking between 2004 and 2005," said report author

Terry Pechacek, the associate director for science at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Office on Smoking and Health. Pechacek believes several factors are associated with the leveling off of smoking rates, including a cutback in spending on smoking-cessation programs. Spending on these programs peaked in 2002 and has declined by about 25 percent ever since, he said. In addition, while cigarette taxes have been rising, per-pack retail prices have only been going up very slowly.

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is a publication of:

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*As the local lung  
health leader, Breathe  
California of the Bay  
Area fights lung disease  
in all its forms and works  
with its communities to  
promote lung health.*

## Upcoming Better Breathers Club Meetings

**Monday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm – Palo Alto**  
Avenidas Senior Center, 450 Bryant St.

Speaker: Gail Gannon, Breathe California  
*Everything You Need to Know About the Cold, Flu and Pneumonia*

**Monday, January 29<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm – San Jose**  
Breathe California Offices, 1469 Park Ave.

Speaker: Breathe California Staff  
*Everything You Need to Know About the Cold, Flu and Pneumonia*

### A Look Ahead: Our February BBC Meetings

\*Gilroy – Thursday February 8<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 am to 12 Noon\*

Palo Alto – Monday, February 12<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 pm to 3 pm

San Jose – Monday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 pm to 3 pm

**\*Please note that in Feb. the Gilroy BBC will meet one week later on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thurs.\***

*The Better Breathers Clubs meet at regular times and locations. They meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday in Palo Alto as well as on the last Monday in San Jose. In addition, the Gilroy Club meets on the 1st Thursday bi-monthly (Feb, April, June, Oct and Dec).*

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