

Better Breathing

A publication of
Breathe California
of the Bay Area

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Holiday Tips for a Happy Home

Source: *Coping with Allergies and Asthma, YourLungHealth.org and The Environmental Protection Agency*

The holidays are here with snow, family parties and many days spent indoors. While it is nice to shut all the doors and windows and curl up in a blanket, most homes contain indoor allergens that trigger allergies creating complications for those people who struggle with respiratory problems. Here are some tips to reduce your exposure to some common irritants that can be found in your home.

No More Dust Mites

Dust and other indoor irritants can accumulate on the surfaces of appliances. Be sure to thoroughly and frequently clean parts like: 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. Because dust can also hitch a ride on our clothes and shoes, take off your shoes before entering the house. Do not forget to wash blankets and bedspreads weekly and sheets and pillowcases more often.

Mold Be Gone

Mold will grow in any place that moisture accumulates. To control indoor mold, keep bathroom and kitchen surfaces dry and use sheet vinyl instead of vinyl squares for the floors. In cellars, basements and garages, waterproof the cement floors. Fix leaky plumbing and seal cracks where water can seep.

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Better Breathing

Meet This Month's Better Breathers Speaker:

Susan Reddell

Have you ever had questions regarding respiratory health, then you should speak with Susan.

For over 30 years, Susan Reddell has worked as a Registered Respiratory Therapist in community hospitals, large medical centers, a children's hospital and in home care. She has taught pulmonary rehab and has led Better Breathers Club meetings.

Presently a staff therapist at Saint Louise Regional Hospital in Gilroy, Susan conducts Pulmonary Function Testing and is in the process of setting up a Pulmonary Rehab Program as well.

Join Susan at this month's meetings as she discusses her topic "Respiratory Medications: The Good, the Bad and the Misunderstood."

Hope to see you there!

Holiday Tips for a Happy Home...

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Also, use a dehumidifier to reduce humidity in damp areas.

Keep a Smoke-Free Home

Second-hand tobacco smoke is an irritant and an air pollutant. This season, let your friends and family know that your home is a smoke-free zone. If anyone in your household does smokes, make sure they smoke outside and away from doorways and windows.

No Pets Allowed...on the Bed

Pet hairs not only cause allergies, but also carry other allergens into your home. Pet owners who have a cat or a dog should wash their pet once a week. Avoid sleeping with your pet. Sleeping with pets increases the amount of contact with unwanted allergens. It is also a good idea to make your bedroom a pet-free zone.

Wash Your Bedding

Sheets and pillowcases need to be washed with hot water once a week or more. Avoid bedding or pillows stuffed with down, feathers or foam

rubber. Cover pillows and mattress with dust-proof, "hypoallergenic" allergen-impermeable fabric cases. Avoid lots of stuffed animals and plush toys.

Clean out the Cockroaches

The droppings or body parts of cockroaches can cause an allergic reaction. To decrease your exposure to cockroach allergens, remove all food sources and household wastes. Store food in airtight sealed containers. Keep counters, sinks, tables and floors thoroughly clean and clear of clutter.

Burn with Care

During chilly nights it maybe nice to use the fireplace, but wood smoke is a serious pollutant. If you plan on using your fireplace, make sure the chimney is cleaned and properly vented to the outside. Burn only firewood and make sure it is not wet to avoid smoke and odor problems. Never burn charcoal, paper or treated wood. Also, never burn on "Spare the Air" nights.

'Tis the Season... To Volunteer!



Health Fair season is over, but Breathe California still needs your help! This holiday season, give back to the community by joining Breathe California's volunteer core. We have many volunteer opportunities ranging from community education to clerical work in our office. Your time is just as valuable as any money donation and we appreciate all the support we get from all our community members like yourselves.

For more information or to join our volunteer core, contact Alethea Corpuz at (408) 998-5865 or alethea@lungsrus.org.

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

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.

Air Pollution Taxing California's Economy

Source: San Francisco Chronicle, November 13, 2008

A new study financed by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation has found that air pollution is costing California's economy billions of dollars. This tremendous cost to the state's economy impacts the pocketbooks of not only the state government, but others like families, hospitals, and health and maintenance organizations.

The study found that premature deaths, respiratory illnesses and heart problems caused by air pollution, carry costs associated with direct medical expenses, lost work/school days and decrease in productivity. However, the authors also found that this can increase other economic costs, like a rise in the prices for goods and services.

According to Jane Hall, professor of economics at California State University Fullerton, lead researcher of the study and a researcher of the impact of air pollution for two decades said, "Most people cannot choose the air they

breathe, and there is a clear consensus that people's lives are shortened by air pollution. Kids are made sick. Workdays are lost."

While the study found that these costs came from throughout the state, the greatest impact came from the Los Angeles Basin and San Joaquin Valley. These areas are home to the worst air pollution and cost the state \$30 billion alone. In addition, the researchers noted that air pollution costs emanating from the two regions can affect the entire state's economy because of the close integrations of manufacturing, shipping, entertainment and agriculture industries throughout the state.

The study comes as California considers new measures to implement its landmark law to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. With the economic crisis front and center, these findings further highlight the potential economic benefits of taking immediate action.

Last Minute Opportunity to Make a Low Cost Contribution

Thanks to some legislation, those of us who are older than 70 ½ have an opportunity to make a direct contribution from our IRA to Breathe California (and other charities) of up to \$100,000 in each of 2008 and 2009. The distribution will count against our required minimum distribution, so if we don't need the distribution to meet living expenses we can pass it on to charity and avoid the tax. If we had made the contribution out of earned income, we would have had to pay tax on it. The contribution must be made to the charity(ies) before the end of the tax year to which they apply.

There are other restrictions, so check with your own advisor to be sure it is right for you.

For more information, please contact Steve French at (408) 998-5865 or at steve@lungsrus.org.

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is a publication of:

**Breathe California
of the Bay Area**
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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, December 8th, 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm – Palo Alto
Avenidas Senior Center, 450 Bryant Street

“Respiratory Medications: The Good, the Bad and the Misunderstood”
Susan Reddell, Registered Respiratory Specialist

Monday, December 29th, 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm – San Jose
Breathe California Offices, 1469 Park Avenue

“Respiratory Medications: The Good, the Bad and the Misunderstood”
Susan Reddell, Registered Respiratory Specialist

A Look Ahead: Our January BBC Meetings

South County – Tuesday, January 13th, 11am – 12 noon
Palo Alto – Monday, January 12th, 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm
San Jose – Monday, January 26th, 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm

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