

Spring Cleaning: Getting Rid of Air Pollution in Your Home

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Here are some ways to improve your indoor air quality and your health, over time. These are examples of what our family and other families we know are doing to make their home environment less toxic. We've learned that, rather than change everything all at once, it is easier to find an alternative to an unhealthy product *prior* to when you need it so you can replace the item with a healthier choice.

Make your own cleaners.

- **Laundry Soap** – While this may seem daunting, making laundry soap takes very few ingredients and only about 20 minutes every 8-10 weeks.
- **Dishwasher Soap** – Using a teaspoon of washing soda and a teaspoon of borax in your dishwasher works very well and is much cheaper than the chemical-drenched variety.
- **Toilet Bowl Cleaner** – Put baking soda and white vinegar into the toilet bowl, allow it to bubble for a few minutes (my kids love this!), and wipe the bowl clean.
- **Hand and Body Soap, Etc.** – A brief search online will yield numerous easy recipes and alternatives that do not take much effort and normally cost much less money than standard cleaners.

Take out the carpet. Carpet traps dirt and dust which can cause health problems. It also contains numerous chemicals in its synthetic fibers, stainproofing substances, and glues that leach into the air over time. Taking out our synthetic carpet cured our son of his allergy problems.

Replace your mattresses. When it was time to get new mattresses at our home, we opted for those without chemical flame retardants, formaldehyde and other chemicals we couldn't pronounce. There are many alternative mattress options available that will not slowly release chemicals every night for you to inhale as you sleep. Many people find that allergies, snoring, sleep apnea and the like disappear when they get wool, cotton or natural rubber (from the rubber tree, not petroleum) mattresses.

Use alternative air fresheners. Air fresheners are popular, but most only mask odors, and the chemicals in them are extremely strong, some even diminishing our ability to smell so that offensive odors do not affect us so much. Opening a window and turning on a fan, using a non-petroleum candle that's scented with natural fragrances, growing indoor plants, and putting one drop of essential oil on a light bulb will keep your home smelling fresh without poisoning your air.