

# Seven Tips for Keeping a Healthy Home



*Families lead, kids succeed.*

Poor housing conditions can cause stress and adverse health issues. Common household conditions that are tied to health outcomes include:

- *Pest infestation such as cockroaches and bedbugs can exacerbate asthma and allergies, and increase risk for hospitalization*
- *Electrical problems can cause shocks, injuries and fires.*
- *Heating malfunctions, mold, dampness, and sewage inside of homes impact allergies and asthma.*

Below are some of the things you can do stay healthy in your home.

## **1. Keep it Dry**

Prevent water from entering your home through leaks in roofing or poor drainage outside. Check your interior plumbing for any leaking inside your home.

## **2. Keep it Clean**

Control dust and contaminants by creating smooth and cleanable surfaces, reducing clutter, and using effective wet-cleaning methods (ex: wiping down counters).

## **3. Keep it Safe**

Store poisons out of the reach of children and keep them properly labeled. Secure loose rugs and keep children's play areas free from hard or sharp surfaces. Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and keep fire extinguishers on hand.

## **4. Keep it Well-Ventilated**

Ventilate bathrooms and kitchens and use whole house ventilation (ex: keeping windows open in multiple rooms) for supplying fresh air to reduce the concentration of contaminants in the home.

## **5. Keep it Pest-free**

All pests look for food, water and shelter. Seal cracks and openings throughout the home; store food in pest-resistant containers. If needed, use sticky-traps and baits in closed containers, along with less toxic pesticides such as boric acid powder.

## **6. Keep it Contaminant-free**

Reduce lead-related hazards in pre-1978 homes by replacing deteriorated paint, and keeping floors and window areas clean using a wet-cleaning approach. Test your home for radon (see web link below) a naturally occurring dangerous gas that enters homes through soil, crawlspaces, and foundation cracks. Install a radon removal system if levels above the EPA action-level are detected.

## **7. Keep it Well-Maintained**

Inspect, clean and repair your home routinely. Take care of minor repairs and problems before they become large repairs and problems.

*For more info:*

[http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/healthy\\_homes/hhi](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/healthy_homes/hhi)