



Connecting Health & Housing: Domestic Hygiene

Presented by:

The California-Nevada
Public Health Training Center

Funded by Grant #UB6HP20202 from the Health Resources and
Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Learning Objectives

After this tutorial you will be able to...

1. Identify the healthy homes issues related to domestic hygiene, such as pest management, clutter and cleaning.
2. Discuss the connection between health and maintaining cleanable surfaces, reducing clutter, and cleaning of the home.
3. Address domestic hygiene in homes using healthy homes recommendations

Identify the Problem

- Clutter and filth can cause germs, pests, and contaminants to collect in a home.
 - Cockroaches, mold, rodents, allergens, and other contaminants are asthma triggers
 - An increase in asthma triggers will exacerbate symptoms in asthmatic individuals



Excessive clutter & filth



Cockroach frass (feces)

Identify the Problem

- Clutter and filth can cause germs, pests, and contaminants to collect in a home.
 - Inappropriately stored food attracts pests, such as mice, rats, cockroaches and ants
 - Clutter creates tripping hazards, provides pest harborage and covers cleanable surfaces



Clutter is a tripping hazard and covers cleanable surfaces

Identify the Problem

- Dust mites
 - Known asthma trigger
 - Dust mites are common in almost every home
 - CDC recommends removing stuffed animals and clutter; washing bed sheets in hot water.
- Lead dust
 - All children living in pre-1978 housing are at risk for potential lead exposure due to deteriorating lead based paint.
 - Approximately 4 million housing units contain elevated levels of lead-contaminated dust and are home to young children

Identify the Problem

- Non-smooth surfaces difficult to maintain and clean
 - Homes should be designed and constructed with smooth, easy to clean surfaces
 - Kitchen and food preparation areas need to be properly maintained, cleaned and kept hygienic
 - Improperly installed flooring and cracks, or unprotected holes allow for dirt, dust and pests to collect
- Under floor spacing, ductwork, and common service ducts should be properly sealed from living areas

Identify the Problem

- Poor storage and disposal of household waste may contribute to pest harborage, injury and emotional distress
 - Pests can cause the cross-contamination of food, food-borne illnesses, food spoilage, and other diseases
 - Rodents are known to damage structural elements of the home
 - Cockroaches can cause dermatitis, rhinitis, bronchitis, asthma, phobias and anxiety



Identify the Problem

- An unclean and cluttered environment increases the risk of
 - Poisonings
 - Injuries
 - Illness
- Who is at risk?
 - Everyone!
 - Young children at risk for injury or infection
 - Asthmatic individuals at risk for allergic reactions and increased asthma symptoms

Identify the Health Effects

- Gastro-intestinal disease
- Asthma exacerbation and allergic rhinitis
- Cuts and injuries
- Emotional distress
- Zoonotic infections
 - Mice and rats: *Yersinia enterocolitica*, *Listeria spp*, *Toxoplasma gondii*, *Trichinella spiralis*
 - Pigeons: *Salmonella spp*

Connection to the Home

- Characteristics of a cleanable home:
 - Smooth, cleanable surfaces
 - Storage space to reduce clutter
 - Properly installed, easy to clean flooring
 - Methods to reduce dust
 - Dust trapping doormat
 - Keep pets outside
 - vacuum and wet clean frequently

Healthy Homes Recommendations

- Preventive Measures
 - Create smooth, cleanable surfaces and repair cracks and holes
 - Increase storage to enable organization
 - Decrease household clutter
 - Use secure, covered storage containers for the household waste
 - Store household waste as far from living areas as possible

Healthy Homes Recommendations

Maintenance Measures

- Frequently **vacuum** using a vacuum cleaner that contains a HEPA (high-efficiency particulate air) filter
- Frequently wet clean to decrease dust
 - Very important for pre-1978 housing, which may contain lead dust
- Frequently wash bedding and other household textiles in **hot water** to decrease dust mite populations
- Practice “healthy cleaning” with less harsh cleaning solutions when possible

Healthy Homes Recommendations

- Healthy Cleaning
 - Effective cleaning does not require harsh or strong chemicals
 - Try alternative recipes that are easy to use, less toxic and will not exacerbate asthma symptoms

All Purpose Cleaner:

1 tsp. Dish detergent
1 tsp. Borax
1 squeeze lemon
1 qt. Warm water

Air Freshener:

Place baking soda or vinegar with lemon juice in a small dish to absorb odors.

Window Cleaner:

2 tsp. Vinegar
1 L Warm water

**Tub & Tile Cleaner:**

Wipe surface with vinegar. Rub in baking soda with damp sponge and rinse with water.

Healthy Homes Recommendations

- Additional “Green Cleaning” recipes provided by the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension:
 - “How to prepare the ‘Green Cleaning-Recipes for a Healthy Home’ recipes”
 - <http://www.fcs.uga.edu/ext/pubs/hace/HACE-E-73-1.pdf>
 - Includes recipes for wood cleaner, oven cleaner, drain cleaner, furniture polish, and plumbing fixture cleaner.

Healthy Homes Recommendations

General Cleaning Schedule

Daily	Weekly	Monthly
Clean counters, sinks and stovetop with warm, soapy water.	Sweep and mop hard-surface floors	Clean the tops of cabinets, baseboards, refrigerator, and ledges in bathroom
Wipe any spills on the floor or counters	Wash and dust all hard surfaces	Clean window sills and window tracks
Store all food in sealed containers	Scrub sinks, showers and toilets	Check for leaks under sinks and repair if found
Keep garbage in a covered container	Vacuum all carpeted areas	Wipe down the inside of the oven/self-clean cycle
Take garbage out daily and keep containers clean	Wash bed sheets in hot water	Clean washing machine: hot water and 2 cups vinegar

Conclusion

- Clutter and filth can cause germs, pests, and contaminants to collect in a home.
- Homes that contain non-smooth surfaces are difficult to maintain and clean
- Poor storage and disposal of household waste may contribute to pest harborage, injury and emotional distress
- Effective cleaning doesn't require harsh or strong chemicals