



## Connecting Health & Housing: Introduction

Presented by:

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Public Health Training Center

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## Learning Objectives

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**After this tutorial you will be able to...**

1. Describe the link between housing and health
2. Describe the need for healthy housing
3. Define components to building a holistic approach for healthy housing

## Linking Housing & Health

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“ The connection between health and the dwelling of the population is one of the most important that exists”

~ Florence Nightingale

## Linking Housing & Health

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- Housing is an essential component of American Life
  - Where we live
  - Where we work
  - Where we play
- In the U.S. the leading causes of **preventable** death, disease and disability are often related to the home environment

## Linking Housing & Health

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- Preventable
  - Injuries (trips and falls, burns, scalds, drowning)
  - Asthma
  - Carbon monoxide poisoning
  - Childhood lead poisoning
  - Cancers

## Identifying At-Risk Populations

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- Housing-related death and injury can affect all classes
  - Some populations are disproportionately affected by health & housing issues
- Disparities among subpopulations may be linked to poor access to safe and healthy housing
  - Young children
  - Elderly
  - Those with a disability
  - Minority populations
  - Low income renters

## Need for Healthy Housing

- Institute of Medicine Report (IOM) 2000
  - Compiled in response to increasing rates of asthma since the 1970s
  - Goals
    - Understand the environmental factors that contribute to the burden of asthma , particularly looking at factors that affect indoor air quality
    - Review the scientific literature to develop mitigation and prevention strategies

## Need for Healthy Housing

### Development of Asthma

- Causative
  - House dust mites
- Association
  - Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS) in preschool-aged children

### Exacerbation of Asthma

- Causative
  - Cat
  - Cockroach
  - Dust Mites
  - Environmental Tobacco Smoke
- Association
  - Dog
  - Fungi or molds
  - Rhinovirus
  - Nitrogen oxides

## Need for Healthy Housing

- American Housing Survey (AHS)
  - Administered by the U.S. Census Bureau every two years by phone to ask questions about the quality of housing in the U.S.
  - Collects data on
    - Housing inventory
    - Characteristics of occupants
    - Physical condition of housing units
    - And much, much more.....

## Need for Healthy Housing

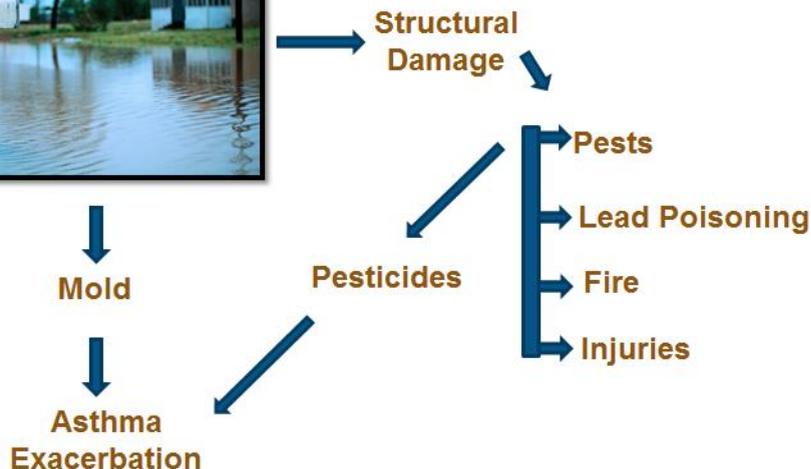
Occupied Housing Units American Housing Survey 2011		
Severe Physical Problems	Moderate Physical Problems	Total
2 million	4 million	6 million

- Severe physical problems (lack one or more of the following)
  - Plumbing
  - Heating
  - Electrical
  - General upkeep
- Moderate physical problems (meet one or more of the following, but are not considered severe)
  - Plumbing
  - Heating
  - Kitchen (lack of cooking appliances)
  - General upkeep

## Holistic Approach to Housing

- Bridging public health & housing
  - Surgeon General's Call to Action to Promote Healthy Homes
  - Multi-agency focus and commitment to prevent disease and injury in the home
- Implementing low-cost or no-cost methods to improve housing quality

## Holistic Approach to Housing



## Conclusion

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- Housing as a determinant of health
  - To improve the nation's health, we must improve the health of the nation's homes
    - Safe
    - Affordable
    - Accessible
    - Environmentally healthy
- Public health professionals are key players in meeting healthy housing goals