

## Keep it Clean:

Ways to help keep your home safe and spotless



*The best way to avoid harmful exposures at home is to keep them out. Regular cleaning helps reduce risk and keeps pests and rodents from moving in.*

### Why we Clean:



- Cleaning isn't just about appearances. A clean home supports better health by reducing exposure to:
  - Dust and dust mites
  - Chemical residues and pollutants
  - Allergens and other harmful substances (even if we can't see or smell them)
  - Food sources and nesting materials that attract pests
- Most of the dust in the home comes from the outside. For more details on specific exposures – like asthma and allergy triggers, moisture problems and pest concerns – please refer to other Keep it Principles factsheets.

## How we Clean:



- Preventing the buildup of dust and dirt is easier than trying to clean it all at once. Here are some simple ways to keep your home cleaner:
  - Remove shoes at the door.
  - Choose hard surfaces over textiles (like blinds instead of curtains and hard flooring instead of carpeting).
  - Limit clutter, which can trap dust and provide hiding places for pests.

## How you clean is just as important as what you clean with:

- Vacuum carpets slowly at least weekly, preferably with a vacuum that uses a HEPA filter. (Check out online videos on proper vacuuming technique.)
- Dust using a damp or microfiber cloth.
- Mop using two buckets – one for washing and the other for rinsing.
- Wash bedding, including pillows and blankets, regularly.

## What we clean with:

### Some cleaning products & practices are safer and more effective than others:

- Germ-heavy areas like toilet bowls and kitchen drains should be both cleaned and disinfected or sanitized.
- Some household cleaners contain chemicals that can irritate airways, trigger asthma symptoms or even contribute to the development of asthma. To reduce your risk, open windows or turn on fans and wear gloves while cleaning.
- For regular cleaning, look for safer products approved by the EPA's Safer Choices Green Seal, or Design for the Environment programs.
- Always follow product instructions. Simply spraying and wiping may not be as effective unless the product is used as directed.
- Store cleaning products safely out of the reach of children and pets.
- Air fresheners don't actually clean the air – and they may be harmful.

For additional tips on safe, effective home cleaning, visit [PEHSU.net](http://PEHSU.net). You can also explore more Keep-it Principle factsheets to help you create a cleaner safer space for everyone in your home.

*Note that some content not mentioned here is discussed in other Keep-It Principle factsheets.*

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