

# How Home (or office) Air Quality Affects Your Health

## Where does poor air quality come from?

Research is now coming to light that the air quality within buildings could be filled with even more pollutants than the outdoor air. This may come as a shock to many people. For years, society has believed that the worst air quality conditions were outside due to the exhaust fumes of cars, the waste from manufacturing companies, and other harmful chemicals that make their way into the air.

This new data should be a concern to everyone given that people spend the vast majority of their time indoors.

The list of possible pollutants that the average person may find in their home is relatively endless. On any given day, you probably use a strong cleaner to scrub your kitchen, a spray bottle of air freshener, or craft products with a strong odor. Perhaps you burn a pancake while making breakfast on Saturday morning and the smoke fills the air. All of your daily activities ultimately contribute to the overall quality of your indoor air.

Some of the most common air pollutants seem like harmless items that find their way into the home. Take a look at some of these sources for reduced indoor air quality below:

- Tobacco products
- Household cleaners
- Excess moisture
- Formaldehyde and other chemicals in furniture or finishes
- Strong paints
- Personal care products like hairspray or perfume
- Smoke from the furnace or stove
- Pesticides

While this list is by no means exhaustive, these are just a handful of the most common ways that indoor air quality can be affected on a daily basis. The air in your home becomes polluted with these chemical irritants but the air quality is drastically reduced when they can't find their way out. Ventilation and allowing them to escape is essential to improving the quality of your indoor air.

Anything released into the air has the potential to contaminate your home. As a result, you may start to feel some immediate health effects.

## **Possible immediate health effects of poor indoor air quality?**

Have you ever walked into a building only to realize that your nose became stuffy, you developed a cough, or it was a little harder to breathe? This is what happens when you immediately encounter an area with reduced indoor air quality. The body will quickly respond to the contaminants in the air with a physical reaction.

Some individuals are far more sensitive to these pollutants and will have exaggerated responses. People who suffer from asthma or severe allergies are likely to fall into this category. However, everyone has the potential to be adversely affected by poor indoor air quality (IAQ).

Many of the immediate symptoms resemble the signs of a common cold or seasonal allergies. You may experience irritated and itchy eyes, a scratchy throat, or irritated sinus passageways. Depending on the severity, you may develop a pounding headache or become suddenly dizzy. You might start to feel sluggish and tired when you're breathing in poor quality air.

If you only experience these symptoms in a particular location, it should be a sign that indoor air quality could be the culprit. For example, you may have many of these symptoms at home but they disappear when you're in your cubicle at work. A common cold and allergies would be more likely to follow you wherever you go. This indicates that you need to do something to improve the overall quality of the air within your home in order to get rid of your symptoms for good.

## **Possible long-term health effects of poor indoor air quality?**

You may experience some symptoms immediately, but it is possible to have some long-term symptoms that could affect you much later. Some of these may not fully appear until some time has passed, but they can be extremely dangerous and detrimental to your health.

You may consistently suffer from the symptoms above, but it's also possible for your body to become less sensitive to the exposure. After a long period of time spent around these pollutants, your body may acclimate to their presence. The result is that your immediate symptoms will weaken and you lose the ability to sense when you're encountering these pollutants in the air.

Years of exposure to reduced indoor air quality could lead to serious health problems such as respiratory diseases or heart disease. Many of the long-term consequences of living with reduced indoor air quality are dependent upon the specific contaminants in your air. However, it is possible for certain types of cancers to develop as well.

As you can imagine, the dangers of these long-term health effects can be extremely hazardous and could be fatal.

It is too difficult to determine which people may be at a greater risk to develop some of these issues. Each person will have a different level of sensitivity to pollutants and irritants. While it is well known that some people will be more susceptible to an extreme reaction, including those with asthma, the rest is still unpredictable.

The best thing that you can do to reduce your overall risk of developing these potentially fatal conditions is to improve the indoor air quality in your home or office environment. Many of the steps are relatively simple to incorporate into your daily routine and annual maintenance. With a little forethought and planning, you may be able to significantly lower your risk of developing these more extreme illnesses and experience more comfort in your daily life.

### **How does moisture affect indoor air quality?**

Moisture plays a significant role in the quality of the air within a building. In particular, moisture is the ideal environment for mold growth to run rampant. At some point, you have likely encountered small amounts of mold in your home already. You may have noticed a few spores around the kitchen sink, near a leak in their shower, or around the window seals. It is a persistent and pesky problem to have in your home, but small amounts of mold can be cleaned up relatively quickly.

When you have a larger problem, you may start to see more serious effects on your health and living conditions overall. The health effects of prolonged exposure to mold are relatively well-known. They can produce symptoms that appear to be closely related to the common cold or the flu virus. However, they can also have serious long-term health effects such as respiratory infections and diseases.

How will you know if mold could be a potential problem in your home? The first sign that mold growth could be imminent is seeing water droplets form on the walls inside of the home. This is most likely to appear in areas that are already subject to a lot of moisture. Take a careful look at the area around windows and doors, near the pipes, in bathrooms, and even on the ceilings. Anywhere that water is nearby could be a potential place for rapid mold growth.

Reducing the humidity level of your home also makes it more difficult for other pollutants to thrive. Bacteria, fungi, and viruses can truly flourish when the humidity levels exceed the 50 percent mark. In addition to the reduced air quality within your home, which can have health effects in and of itself, high humidity levels could also contribute to more frequent illnesses this way.

## How can you improve indoor air quality?

Promoting healthy indoor air quality doesn't have to be difficult or time-consuming. Many homeowners could make just a handful of minor changes throughout their home to encourage a much healthier living environment. Depending on the setup of your home, there may not even be any substantial cost to implement these steps.

The first and easiest thing for most individuals to do is to release the pollutants from the home. Unless you are dealing with mold, the problem in your home could simply be that there are too many pollutants trapped inside. As a society, we tend to falsely believe that outdoor air is harmful and rarely allow it into our homes. Unfortunately, this leads to a vicious cycle where harmful chemicals become trapped in our indoor air.

In the end, our health may suffer because we are prizing the energy efficiency of our air conditioning or heating systems over the fresher outdoor air. The reality is that we need a balance of fresh air and energy efficiency to prevent some of these conditions.

How can you get the freshness of outdoor air into your home? You could simply open the windows on a nice afternoon instead of turning on the air conditioning. However, if you open the windows during certain times of the year you may be allowing excess pollen to enter your home that could intensify symptoms associated with seasonal allergies.

You can also limit the number of pollutants in the air by choosing your household products wisely. This may mean switching from your favorite brand of hairspray to an option that has low VOCs. You might want to consider looking for household cleaners that aren't as strong.

One of the largest sources of indoor air pollution is smoking. If you have a habit of smoking inside the home, this can lead to a serious buildup of pollutants over the months and years. Take your smoke breaks outside on the front porch instead of in the living room to see a drastic improvement in the quality of your indoor air. You won't want to compound the negative health effects associated with smoking by lowering your indoor air quality as well.

## How can you supplement these steps?

Unfortunately, it would be next to impossible to eliminate all of the pollutants from your home. There will come a time when you have to cook indoors, paint a wall, or put on perfume. It isn't always a feasible solution to open the window, particularly during certain times of the year or when the weather doesn't permit. What should you do when this situation arises?

Energy in the air is the key to reducing the amount of polluted air in your home. There is a great solution that homeowners may be interested in when it comes to keeping indoor air energized. This is something that you will want to investigate in the very near future.

Outdoors, Mother Nature, using the sun, moisture in the air, wind and elements found naturally in the air, **energizes** the air and cleans the air of most pollutants and other harmful things in the air. The energy interacts with naturally occurring compounds found in the air to create a series of oxidation and reduction actions to change pollutants, germs, viruses and bacteria at the molecular level to create harmless by-products. Nature also uses ions to cause even very small, fine particles to clump together and fall out of the air. Nature does everything in balance which is what makes it all work.

Indoors, the air rapidly loses its energy and becomes stale and “dead”. When this happens it cannot clean the air of harmful particles, odors and other undesirable things. The moisture in the air builds up; mold, mildew and germs thrive in this dead, de-energized environment.

If you spend a lot of time in a specific area of your home or work with lots of potential pollutants, you may want to “**naturalize**” – one definition of *naturalize* is “to make like nature”) your indoor air and make it act like outdoor air!

The alternative to stale, dead air would be energized and fresh air. The way to achieve this would be an Air Naturalizer™ system.

The [Air Naturalizer System](#) consists of one or more small (4½” tall) units each capable of treating up to 800 square feet. These devices use a revolutionary Organic Air Technology to electronically replicate what Mother Nature does outdoors. They “**Restore the Energy to Indoor Air to Make it Act Like Fresh, Natural, Healthy Outdoor Air!**”

This Organic Air Technology energizes the air and interacts with components in the air to create the same oxidation and reduction actions and the hydroxyls found in nature to interact and change contaminants at the molecular level. Each unit also puts over 70 Trillion Negative and 70 Trillion Positive ions per second (remember that *balance* that nature does).

This action is very effective at removing odors, killing germs, mold and mildew spores and removing particles from the air. It even kills germs, bacteria and viruses on surfaces such as countertops, door handles and furniture or any surface.

Using an Air Naturalizer system freshens, energizes and cleans your indoor air. Fresh outdoor air energizes you, helps you sleep better, helps your immune system and you feel more mentally alert. For more information, please check out [GreenHealthTechnologies.com](http://GreenHealthTechnologies.com) Don't you and your family or associates deserve to breathe like this **Indoors?**

