

breathe easy

Improve
indoor
air quality
for better
health

This past winter was very cold and snowy, keeping most of us indoors for several weeks at a time. We often think we're safe from sources of air pollution in our own homes — but according to the Environmental Protection Agency, pollutant levels may be two to five times or more higher indoors than outdoors.

Contributing Factors

"Many things can contribute to poor indoor air quality, including volatile organic compounds (VOCs)," says Julie McNairn, MD, board-certified allergist and immunologist on the medical staff at Atrium Medical Center. "VOCs are the chemicals found in many household items, like new carpet, adhesives, paints, sealants or even mold spores. Over time, they will disappear, but when present they put chemicals into the air."

Environmental chemicals such as cigarette smoke, dust and pet dander also reduce the quality of indoor air, causing irritation or allergic reactions. Pet dander, pollen and dust mites are all made up of large particles, which can get trapped in the nose and throat. "But fine particles can travel deep into the throat or lungs,



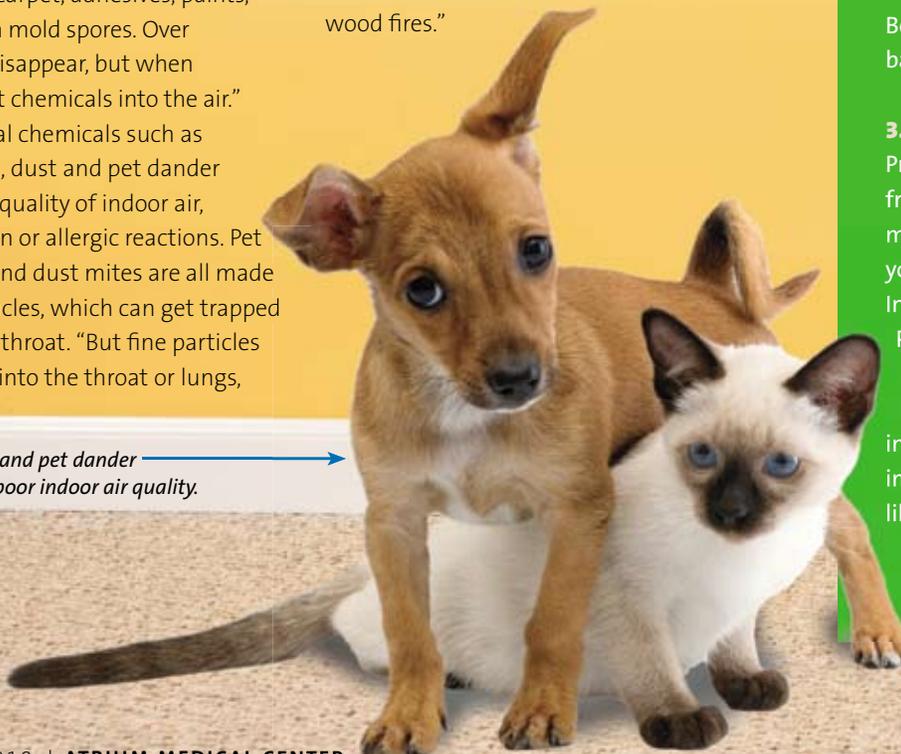
JULIE MCNAIRN, MD

Allergist and
Immunologist
at Atrium
Medical Center

and can mimic allergy symptoms or even trigger asthma," Dr. McNairn adds.

The harmful effects of radon and carbon monoxide gases are well-known, and are considered big problems in our outdoor air. "They can also be produced right inside your home," warns Dr. McNairn, "from things like gas stoves, furnaces, water heaters and wood fires."

New carpet, paint and pet dander can contribute to poor indoor air quality.



CARE FOR YOUR AIR

"The good news is that there are simple steps you can take to improve indoor air quality," Dr. McNairn advises. They include:

1. ELIMINATE THE SOURCE.

Get rid of pet dander by vacuuming or by keeping pets outdoors. Dust surfaces often and vacuum regularly. Eliminate moist areas and leaks.

2. VENTILATE YOUR HOME.

Indoor air quality is often worse in a tightly constructed home. Opening windows may seem like a good way to freshen the air inside, but it can actually compound the problem by letting in pollutants and pollen. A better option is to keep the fan on a central air or heating unit running at all times, which will maintain the airflow through a filter. Change the filter often for more effective air cleaning. Be sure fans above stoves and in bathrooms ventilate outside.

3. DON'T ADD TO THE PROBLEM!

Products purchased to clean, freshen or "purify" your home might actually add chemicals to your air. Check the National Institute of Health's Household Products Database (HPD) at hpd.nlm.nih.gov for specific information about chemicals in cleaning products. As an immediate step, try using things like vinegar as a grease cutter and baking soda as an abrasive cleanser.



A calendar of health and wellness programs

the events



orthopedics

TOTAL JOINT REPLACEMENT EDUCATION PROGRAM

This class is for people who are preparing for knee and hip replacement surgeries. You'll learn what to expect during your hospital stay and how to get your home ready for your return after surgery. You'll also learn how each member of your health care team plays a role in your hospital stay and recovery. **You or your physician's office can call (513) 420-5007 to register for this class.**

COST FREE

DATES May 6 or 20; June 3 or 17; July 1 or 15; August 12 or 26

DAYS Thursdays, 9 to 10:35 a.m.

LOCATION Atrium Medical Center

SPINE SURGERY BOOT CAMP

This class is for people who are preparing for spine surgery. Learn what to expect during your hospital stay and how to get your home ready for your return after surgery. You'll learn about pre-surgical preparation, the surgical procedure, post-operative recovery steps, proper nutrition and pain management options. You'll also learn how each member of your health care team plays a role in your hospital stay and recovery.

You or your physician's office can call (513) 420-5007 to register for this class.

COST FREE

DATES May 13 or 27; June 10 or 24; July 8 or 22; August 5 or 19

DAYS Thursdays, 9 to 10:30 a.m.

LOCATION Atrium Family YMCA, Conference Room, 5750 Innovation Drive on Atrium's campus



general wellness

FREE HEARING SCREENINGS

In recognition of National Better Speech and Hearing Month, Atrium will be hosting two free hearing screenings. Amy Holland, Au.D., and Angela Byrd, Au.D., will perform visual exams of the ear as well as hearing testing. Consultations will be offered for appropriate treatment options if needed. **Registration is required. Please call (513) 891-8700.**

DATE Wednesday, May 26, 9 a.m. to noon

LOCATION Atrium Medical Center, Professional Building, 4th Floor, Women's Center

DATE Monday, May 31, 9 a.m. to noon

LOCATION Atrium Medical Center, Professional Building, 2nd Floor, AMC Professional Office, Suite 250

CARDIAC PREVENTION PROGRAM

Our program of supervised exercise and personalized education helps you identify and lower your risk for coronary artery disease. **For more information or to register, call (513) 420-5258.**

COST \$519 for eight weeks (three times per week)

LOCATION Atrium Medical Center, Professional Building, 2nd Floor, Cardiac Care Center

DIABETES SELF-MANAGEMENT TRAINING

Learn to manage diabetes with training from the Diabetes Wellness Center. Individual and group sessions are available. The cost of this service is billed to insurance.

For more information, call (513) 727-5475.

