

# How healthy is the air inside your home?

(ARA) - Do you suffer from allergies or asthma? We're all aware of the potential hazards of allergens and pollutants in our outdoor environments, but have you ever considered what might be affecting your indoor environment?

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Americans spend up to 90 percent of their time indoors, and indoor allergens and irritants can play a significant role in triggering asthma attacks. Allergies are the 5th leading chronic disease in the United States among all ages, according to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, and the third most common chronic disease among children under 18 years of age. Thomas Boecher, vice president of DeLisle Associates, an environmental health and safety consulting firm, recommends "the avoidance of environmental triggers including pollen, environmental tobacco smoke, and mold is a very important key to minimizing problems related to asthma."

How can you reduce exposure to indoor air pollutants at home? One proven method is to remove the source of the pollutant or allergen by cleaning your heating, ventilation, and air conditioning system. HVAC systems have been shown to act as a collection source for a variety of contaminants that have the potential to affect your health. These contaminants may include mold, fungi, bacteria, pet dander, construction debris, insect parts (dust mites and roaches) and very small particles of dust.

Once you've determined a need to have your HVAC system cleaned, the next step is finding a qualified contractor. The National Air Duct Cleaners Association (NADCA) is a good resource for your HVAC system cleaning needs. NADCA is the only organization that provides certification to HVAC cleaning contractors around the world, so you can be sure your contractor knows the proper ways to clean your system.

Other tips toward improving indoor air quality include increasing ventilation, limiting the use of carpeting, vent bathrooms, kitchens, toilets, and laundry rooms directly outdoors, store volatile compounds such as paints, solvents, cleaners, and pesticides out of the occupiable space and away from ventilation air intakes, and minimize or avoid altogether unvented combustion sources such as candles, cigarettes, indoor barbecues, decorative combustion appliances, or vent-free heaters.

For more information visit [www.nadca.com](http://www.nadca.com).

Courtesy of ARAcontent