

Healthy Homes

... & CLEANING WITH CHEMICALS



WHY IS IT HARMFUL?

Using household chemicals often is known to increase the risk of developing asthma in otherwise healthy people by 30-50%. ^{1, 2} Exposure during pregnancy can cause reduced lung function and persistent wheezing in babies that can last years after birth.

Harmful chemicals are found in many consumer products. They can be breathed in or absorbed through the skin, and some - like boric acid (borax) - can even cross the placenta. For a tiny developing foetus, even small amounts of household toxins can have BIG effects like birth defects, abnormal vision, and low IQ.

In Canada, there is no requirement to list all ingredients in cleaning products.

HEALTHY HOME TIPS:

"Green" labels do not always mean a product is safe. ³

- Machine-washable microfibre cloths and mops or abrasive sponges and brushes will effectively remove dust, dirt and soap residues without harsh chemicals
- DIY alternatives made with simple kitchen ingredients have been used for generations and can replace most chemical cleaners
- Ordinary soap and water remove 99% of household bacteria, and regularly wiping away surface dirt/grime prevents these bugs from thriving in the first place!



Non-toxic alternative:

1. Mix 1/4 tsp (just a few drops) of unscented dish soap with 2 cups warm water, swirl to combine
2. Spray surface lightly (no need to saturate - excess water can damage some surfaces)
3. Wipe dry with a clean cloth

Note: This soap solution is diluted enough to leave no residue and use without rinsing on most surfaces, however if you have very hard water you may notice some white film (especially on shiny areas!) In these instances, simply rinse your cleaning cloth and wipe again as needed.