6 Things in Your Home That Are Unintentionally Making Your Family Sick

Carpet

Homes are meant to make a family feel safe, secure, and together. While many people take steps to ensure that their homes are clean and healthy places, there are several considerations you may be overlooking in your endeavors to keep your family healthy. Check out these six areas in your home that might accidentally be causing problems for your family.

Carpeting is a household staple. But carpeting might be making your family feel sick. For one, carpet traps pollen, pet dander, dust mites, and other allergens. Some carpet materials also give off volatile organic compounds. These compounds evaporate and are inhaled, which can cause respiratory problems. Volatile organic compounds don’t just appear in carpeting, either.

To eliminate the problem, furnish your home with items that don’t contain volatile organic compounds by asking at the furniture store. Buy thinner carpeting and keep your home well ventilated.

Dust Mites

Most people with dust allergies are actually allergic to dust mites. The microscopic critters like warm weather and high humidity. When they die, they tend to collect in fabric-based furniture and accessories, like beds, pillows, couches, and the like. So if you or anyone in your family experiences

allergy symptoms outside of the typical allergy season, the reaction may be to a dust mite allergy.

There are several steps you can take to reduce the number of dust mites in your home, including keeping your humidity down, regularly washing your linens in hot water, and getting rid of bedroom carpeting.

Drinking Water

The EPA regulates and protects clean drinking water, so most people feel it’s safe to drink straight from the tap. But even with the EPA’s involvement, drinking water may not be as clear of contaminates as we’d like to believe. Trace amounts of pharmaceuticals, like ibuprofen and anticonvulsants, have been found in metropolitan water supplies.

The simple workaround might appear to be to drink water out of bottles, but a lot of water bottles are actually filled with tap water that hasn’t been filtered for these specific contaminates. Consider instead water filtration for the whole house, which has the added bonus of preventing the plastic waste that comes from drinking water out of bottles.

Carbon Monoxide

Most homes have smoke detectors that alert you to the presence of smoke in your house. But unless your smoke alarm specifically also features a carbon monoxide detection system, the dangerous gas might be present in your home without your knowledge. Carbon monoxide is odorless, colorless, and has many common household sources like gas heaters, furnaces, dryers, fireplaces, motor vehicles, and more. To protect your family, make sure carbon monoxide producing devices are properly ventilated, and purchase a detector.

Mothballs

Fumigants are what make mothballs so useful against pests. Mothballs contain chemicals that release into the air and kill pests at high enough doses. But these high doses of chemicals can also be harmful to humans. The side-effects of inhaling these chemicals include dizziness, headaches, vomiting, difficulty breathing, and red blood cell loss. Next time you need to take care of creepy crawly pests, safer ways to treat the problem exist. You can eliminate moths without resorting to mothballs.

Refrigerator

Your refrigerator might also contribute to making your family ill. A packed fridge with incorrectly stored food can end up growing things that cause food poisoning. Plus, if the temperature is off, by even a little bit, it only makes matters worse. Keep your cooked and uncooked foods well away from each other, especially meats. Clean the interior of your fridge regularly. Find out what temperature your fridge should be and check it often.

While checking for mold and having a working smoke detector seem like obvious ways to keep your house clean and your family healthy, you may be overlooking some subtler aspects of the equation. Some of these issues, like dust mites, the refrigerator, and carpeting, aren’t deathly serious, others like carbon monoxide and mothballs can cause serious health problems, especially with prolonged exposure. Thankfully most of these areas are easy to take care of with a little diligence.