Monitoring and Improving Your Indoor Air Quality

These days, a lot of people are doing everything they can to stay healthy. They are buying organic groceries and hitting the gym five or six times a week. Many are forsaking their cars for bicycles and using their kitchens instead of always dining out. And of course, fewer people are picking up the terribly unhealthy habit of smoking cigarettes, while more people are putting those cancer sticks down. But while all of these changes are great ways to get healthier and to live a better, fuller, healthier life, a lot of people are missing an important component to their health: air quality.

We breathe air all day long, every day, so air quality can make a huge difference in our health. And while pollution is often misunderstood as an outdoor problem, indoor air quality matters, too. If you are experiencing frequent headaches, unusual lethargy, allergies, or sinus problems, air quality might be to blame. The good news is that there are plenty of ways you can monitor and improve the air quality in your home.

To monitor your air quality, you have two options: actively test the air or passively monitor it. Actively monitoring air quality includes cleaning air filters in heating and air conditioner systems and looking for signs of black mold or other harmful contaminants. Passive air quality monitoring involves using an air filter system that can be watched and routinely checked. The method that you choose will depend on the type of space, what it is used for, and who is using it. Consider consulting a professional to determine what makes the most sense for your home or office space.

You probably also want to know how to improve your indoor air quality, and there is no reason to wait to make some basic improvements. Here are a few easy ways to get started.

IMPROVEMENT TIP #1 – Install or update the batteries in your air monitoring systems, including carbon monoxide and radon gas detectors. Make sure you have a monitor in all the main areas of the building or home. Don't skimp here – the consequences can be disastrous!

IMPROVEMENT TIP #2 – Keep your home and/or office clean. There are a lot of reasons to keep a tidy home or office. Besides the fact that it will make you and your employees/co-workers more productive, it is better for air quality. Do not allow old building materials or other items to lay around if they should be in storage or in the trash. Make sure your rugs are vacuumed and your trashcans are emptied regularly.

IMPROVEMENT TIP #3 – Replace all of your filters! No matter what the season or how long you have lived in your home, get into the habit of regularly changing your air filters. You should be changing the filters in your air conditioners and heating systems once a month. Pay for semi-annual inspections and cleanings too.

IMPROVEMENT TIP #4 – In addition to removing toxins from the air, you can also make changes that will neutralize them. Consider purchasing in-room air purification machines and decorate with plenty of green plants, especially in areas with poor air circulation. The plants will eat up toxic carbon dioxide and provide clean oxygen fit for human breathing.

IMPROVEMENT TIP #5 – Get rid of the air fresheners! A lot of people try to mask bad odors or other air problems with artificially scented air fresheners. These sprays have toxic chemicals that you should be shooing out, not inviting in. Instead, make your own air freshener by simply adding some herbs or citrus peels to a pot of boiling water.

IMPROVEMENT TIP #6 – This one might seem like a no brainer. Open the windows! Opening windows quickly cleans your indoor air and it's free! For a significant impact on your air

quality, keep a window in each room open every day for at least five full minutes.

Further Reading:

- *Inexpensive, Easy Detox – The One Gallon Challenge*
- *Improve Indoor Air Quality to Promote Health*
- *Home Detox, Reduce Indoor Pollution*