

Cleaning Matters

May/June 2004

Tips and Trends from The Soap and Detergent Association

The Facts About Antibacs

Antibacterial cleaning and personal care products kill harmful bacteria

According to The Soap and Detergent Association, antibacterial cleaning and personal care products do what they say they do: *They kill harmful bacteria.* Media reports describing a recent study on usage of antibacterial products in the home may have left some consumers confused about the benefits of these products. The research in question – published in the March 2004 *Annals of Internal Medicine* – focused on diseases caused by viruses, *not* bacteria.

The research findings in this particular study were not surprising, as none of the antibacterial products tested claimed nor were designed or formulated to be effective against viruses. Depending on their active ingredient(s) and specific formulation, antibacterial soaps can be effective against bacteria that can cause odor, skin infections, food poisoning, intestinal illnesses, and other commonly-transmitted diseases. These products are regulated by the Food and Drug Administration.

Household disinfectants and antibacterial household cleaning products – depending on their active ingredients, specific formulation, and use instructions – are designed to kill a wide variety of microorganisms that can live on inanimate surfaces, such as the bacteria *Salmonella* and *E. coli*, which cause intestinal illness, and *Staphylococcus*, which causes skin infections.

In some cases, disinfectant products and certain antibacterial products may be formulated to have efficacy against fungi and viruses. Some examples include the fungus that causes athlete's foot; viruses such as Herpes simplex; *Rhinovirus*, the leading cause of the common cold, and *Rotavirus*, the major cause of diarrhea in young children. To determine the product that's right for the job, read the label. On germ-killing

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World Asthma Day is Tuesday, May 4, 2004

For tips to help asthma sufferers breathe easily, see page 2. Also, be sure to visit the SDA Web site at: www.cleaning101.com and the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute's Web site at: www.nhlbi.nih.gov.

Meet SDA at . . .

- The American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Annual Convention & Exposition, June 26-29, 2004, Town and Country Resort, San Diego, CA (Booth #327).
- The National Association of School Nurses Annual Conference, July 11-14, 2004, the Washington State Convention & Trade Center, Seattle, WA (Booth #415).

disinfectants and household cleaning products, look for an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) registration number, which is required on these types of products.

And it's important to remember that numerous studies have shown positive health benefits from using antibacterial products in home, institutional, educational, and healthcare settings. For more information, log on to: www.cleaning101.com/antibacterial.



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News Flash

Action Plan for Asthma

Keeping allergens at bay!

Asthma is on the rise! In fact, in the U.S., it affects more than **one child in 20** and accounts for nearly **10 million** lost school days per year. For adults, asthma is the fourth leading cause of work loss, resulting in **nine million** lost workdays in the U.S. each year. Alarmingly, by the year 2020, an estimated **29 million** Americans will have asthma.

If you suffer from asthma or have a family member who does, help is here, courtesy of The Soap and Detergent Association. Use these tips to help keep allergens in check.

What Is Asthma?

Asthma is an incurable, inflammatory disorder of the airways. Allergens (tiny airborne particles) are the “triggers” that can set off an asthma episode. They’re hidden, but can be life-threatening for asthma sufferers. The five most common allergens are dust mites, animal dander (skin flakes and saliva), cockroaches and their droppings, mold and mildew, and outdoor pollen.

The Action Plan

Controlling asthma flare-ups means enlisting all the help you can get. Start by:

- **Visiting your healthcare provider.** Your doctor or clinic can help you figure out which allergens affect the sufferer the most. They can also provide asthma information and help you determine other steps you may need to take – such as removing carpeting from your home, installing special air filters, or limiting exposure to pets.
- **Cleaning to remove allergens.** Start with a room-by-room cleaning plan. Your first stop is the room where the asthma sufferer sleeps. Wash bedding and curtains. Dust and vacuum. Clean windowsills and frames. Wet mop the floors. Remove stuffed animals or enclose them in a cabinet. Be sure to visit www.cleaning101.com for complete information on “cleaning to control asthma.”
- **Keeping an asthma diary.** Track asthma episodes to help you pinpoint the triggers.

Family Ties

Make “cleaning to control asthma” a family affair

If you have a family member who suffers from asthma, keeping your home clean is essential. To share this responsibility, make cleaning a family affair! By involving the whole family, cleaning can be done in less time, with more efficient results, says The Soap and Detergent Association. Start with these fun ideas:

- **Create a family calendar.** Make a list of the tasks to be done. Then assign days for completing them. Decorate the calendar with funny notes or cut-outs from magazines.
- **Have a badge bowl** so family members can randomly “draw” their own cleaning assignments for the week.
- **Create pin-on job badges** with whimsical titles like “Captain Clutter,” “Super Sweeper,” “Vacuum Patrol,” and “Deputy Duster.” Have family members wear the badges as they clean.
- **Set a timer** and have the family gather to report their progress when the timer goes off.
- **Reward the gang** for a job well done with favorite drinks, pizza, or ice cream.

Picnic for a Day

Clean fun without bacteria!

Picnicking can be fun! But, be sure to keep bacteria from crashing outdoor celebrations by handling foods properly, says The Soap and Detergent Association. If harmful foodborne bacteria are consumed, they can cause foodborne illness. Here are proper food handling tips for *before*, *during*, and *after* your picnic.

Pre-picnic tips: Keep hands, utensils, preparation surfaces, and containers for transporting food clean. Use hand dishwashing detergent and hot water to get rid of bacteria. Rinse fruits and vegetables under running water before preparation and packing.

Picnic in the midst: Some picnic sites may not have a warm water source – or may not even have running water! So pack your picnic hamper with hand gel sanitizer or a packet of hand-cleaning wipes. Toss in some disinfecting or antibacterial wipes, too, so you can clean off dirty picnic tables and benches.

Post-picnic how-tos: If you take along reusable serving utensils and bowls, wash them with hand dishwashing detergent and hot water as soon as you return home.

A Memorable Mother's Day!

A gift mom won't forget – a vacation from cleaning

Attention spouses and kids – The Soap and Detergent Association has the perfect gift for Mother's Day. And, it doesn't require wrapping! Give mom a vacation from cleaning. First, lure her out of the house, so you can clean with ease. Be sure to check the cleaning aisle in your favorite store for new cleaning products that take the "labor" out of clean up. With these easy-to-use products, even cleaning-challenged family members can produce effective results!

Wipe and swipe. Ready-to-use wipes with the cleaning product embedded are perfect for one-stop cleaning. For instance, heat-activated wipes clean baked-on foods in microwaves; disinfectant wipes help remove grime on sinks, countertops, toilets, light switch covers, and faucet handles; and dusting wipes get rid of dust on surfaces like tabletops, television screens, picture frames, and knickknacks.

Crisp and fresh. If you're planning an indoor event or celebration for mom, why not dress the table with special linens? Instead of ironing, you can use a wrinkle-releasing spray to make linens look crisp and beautiful. Use fabric refreshers to cover up and neutralize odors on hard-to-wash and soft surfaces, such as carpets, upholstery, and curtains.

TLC for floors. No need for a bucket of water with these new floor care products. Wet floor wipes clean vinyl, ceramic tile, laminate, linoleum, and finished wood floors. New floor mops come with disposable cleaning pads. Some have cartridge systems that deploy the cleaning solution; others have the solution already embedded in the pad. Dry, electrostatic floor wipes are disposable cloths that capture dust and grime. The dust is then disposed along with the cloth.

Flush away. Flushable bathroom wipes are great for cleaning toilet rims, tanks, faucets, sinks, and basins. When finished, you can flush them in the toilet because they are designed to disperse in water when agitated, like toilet paper, so they're safe for plumbing and septic tanks.

Remember to read the label. Read and follow the product label directions on all cleaning products. *Shh*, don't tell mom – let her think she taught you everything you know!

Highlights

From Your Mailbox to Your Inbox

Coming in 2005 – Cleaning Matters goes electronic!

Forgot which issue contained tips on care for silks and rayons? Tired of watching the mailbox for your current issue? In 2005, *Cleaning Matters* (formerly *Cleanliness Facts*) will be completely electronic! No more shuffling through pages and pages of paper or waiting for the mail carrier's delivery!



Have the newsletter delivered right to your inbox or visit www.cleaning101.com to register for complete access to past and present issues that you've come to love! To make sure you stay in the know, send an email including your name, email address, phone number, and "Cleaning Matters Subscription" in the subject area to: cleaningmatters@cleaning101.com today!



Cleaning Questions?

Ask Nancy!

Q: Is it true that drying clothes in the dryer kills dust mites?

A: Yes, drying in a regular or permanent press cycle (at least 130° F for 10 consecutive minutes) kills most dust mites. It's also important to note that the best way to keep bedroom dust mites under control is to frequently wash and dry bedding.

Q: My son plays little league baseball, and his socks get so dirty. What's the best way to clean them?

A: First, pretreat socks with a prewash stain remover. Then, launder in the hottest water that's safe for the fabric, using a bleach that's safe for the fabric. Repeat procedure if necessary.

— Nancy Bock is Vice President of Education for The Soap and Detergent Association



The Soap and Detergent Association
1500 K Street NW, Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20005

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Clean Ideas

De-clutter Your Summer!

Clean up and make more time for fun

- 1. Junk toss.** Recycle or throw out junk mail immediately. Store “to-be-reads” in a designated box.
- 2. Make room.** Make space for necessities by holding a garage sale for old toys and unused electronics, such as VCRs, computers, toasters, etc.
- 3. Store it!** Use sealable containers for storing desk materials (pens, staples, paper clips); sewing items (zippers, buttons, threads); picnic cutlery (plastic knives, spoons, forks); cosmetics (lipsticks, nail polish, hair clips).
- 4. Out of sight.** Hang cork bulletin boards inside your pantry closet to pin stray notes, bills, and receipts – out of everyone’s view.

- 5. Trading places.** Designate drawer space for socks; for underwear; for scarves and other accessories, etc.
- 6. Hidden décor.** Stash magazines and newspapers in beautiful lidded baskets. And, be sure to recycle or toss out old issues every month.
- 7. Hook it up!** Use baskets, plastic organizers, hooks, and hanging bags to gather clutter. These are great for storing shoes, toys, socks, mittens, and pocketbooks.

For more information, visit: www.cleaning101.com

About Us

SDA, the home of the U.S. Cleaning Products Industry, is dedicated to educating the public about the safety and benefits of cleaning products and practices and protecting the ability of our members to formulate products that best meet consumer needs.