



CLEANLINESS FACTS

TIPS AND TRENDS FROM THE SOAP AND DETERGENT ASSOCIATION

475 Park Avenue South New York, New York 10016

PREVENTING MOLD AND MILDEW

Tips for Kitchens and Baths

Because water is essential to the everyday functions of kitchens and bathrooms, these two rooms pose special concerns in households where family members suffer from allergies and/or asthma. Tubs, showers and shower curtains, tile grout, sinks, countertops, faucets, garbage cans, diaper pails, and litter boxes can all be breeding grounds for mold and mildew.

There are three hidden areas where mold and mildew often live: around window frames and sills, under sinks, and where the tub or shower meets the floor. Keep these areas clean and dry to stop or prevent mold growth. In addition to controlling these areas, The Soap and Detergent Association recommends the following mildew-preventing strategies.

Use the exhaust fan when bathing or showering, wipe down shower walls after showering using a sponge or squeegee, and keep shower doors and curtains open after use to allow the shower walls to air dry.

Mildew grows on the soap film that can form rings around the bathtub. Use a soap scum remover to clean off these deposits.

Towels and bathmats are additional mildew attractors. Hang them after each use so they air dry, and launder them at least once a week.

Don't install wall-to-wall carpeting in a bathroom. It holds moisture and can't be thoroughly dried.

Launder shower curtains frequently as they are especially susceptible to mildew. Read and follow the care labels for the curtains. Most can be laundered using detergent and liquid household bleach. If they are heavily mildewed, presoak the mildewed areas in one-quarter cup of liquid household bleach and one gallon of water. Test on an inconspicuous corner of the curtain to be sure the bleach is safe for the fabric. If not, use a solution of color-safe bleach and water, following the bleach label directions. If the curtains are vinyl,

TABLE OF CONTENTS

May/June 1999

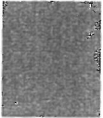
PREVENTING MOLD AND MILDEW Tips for Kitchens and Baths	1
FTC ISSUES CONSUMER ALERT <i>Laundry Gadgets Won't Lighten the Load</i>	2
MOISTURE PATROL FOR ASTHMA CONTROL Moisture Attracts Allergens	3
MISCELLANY	
Baked to Perfection	4
Filtering Out Allergens	4
High Tech Hair Care	4
Manning Her Wardrobe	4
WHAT'S NEW?	5
MANAGING ALLERGIES & ASTHMA SDA Order Form	5
"KEEP IT CLEAN" BRIEFS	6

scrub the heavily mildewed areas with liquid bleach or a mildew remover. Do not dry a vinyl curtain in the dryer. Instead, remove it from the washing machine and rehang it on the shower rod to drip dry. If any creases or wrinkles remain, they will be steamed away after a few hot showers. Note, too, that some shower curtains are specially treated to resist mildew.

There are new cleaning products that can be sprayed on shower curtains and walls to prevent mildew growth. Simply spray after every shower and mold/mildew and soap scum won't return!



SDA



Use a mildew remover to remove mold/mildew in kitchens and baths. Follow the label instructions and use in a well-ventilated area. In order to work effectively, these products should be sprayed directly onto the mildew and allowed to stay on the surface for a few minutes. Then, the surface should be wiped off and rinsed thoroughly. Most mildew removers should not be used by an asthmatic person and many contain bleach so they shouldn't come in contact with clothes, fabric, carpet, wood, rubber and painted or papered surfaces.

Disinfectants and disinfectant (antibacterial) cleaners are often formulated to control or prevent the growth of mold and mildew. Read the label carefully to determine if a product has this capability. As a general rule, most disinfectant products need to be in contact with a surface from 30 seconds to 10 minutes - follow label directions for specific instructions. As a preventive measure, use the product two to three times a week to prevent mildew's return. If using a product that is a disinfectant only, clean the surface first, then apply the disinfectant. Disinfectant cleaners can be used to clean *and* disinfect surfaces.

Another benefit of using disinfectant products is their ability to kill germs that cause respiratory illnesses, such as colds and flu, which can be serious for people with asthma. Disinfect areas that are frequently touched, such as faucet handles, door handles and cabinet knobs, and areas that remain moist, such as sinks, countertops, faucets and toilet seats. It's important to wash your hands frequently to help reduce the spread of germs — another important illness prevention step for asthmatics. ■

FTC ISSUES CONSUMER ALERT ***Laundry Gadgets Won't Lighten the Load***

On April 22, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) issued a News Release and Consumer Alert about laundry detergent substitutes, charging distributors with making false and unsubstantiated advertising claims. The laundry substitutes include a small plastic ball filled with allegedly "structured water" and a ball divided into two parts, one part of which contains a blue liquid that the company marketed as containing "I_E crystals" or "I_E structures."

Jodie Bernstein, Director of the FTC's Bureau of Consumer Protection, said, "These companies appealed to consumers' desire to help the environment and save some money. Today, on Earth Day, many consumers will be looking for green products and may believe these products are better for the environment. Before tossing out their tried and true detergents, consumers should think twice. Tests show that these gadgets do little more than clean out your wallet. At best, they're marginally better than washing clothes in hot water alone, and not as effective as washing them with laundry detergent. At worst, the products are completely useless."

In the Consumer Alert, the FTC urges consumers to follow good laundry practices in order to get the best cleaning results.

- Follow the care label instructions.
- Pre-treat stains.
- Sort by color. Wash whites separately; light and medium colors together; and brights and darks by themselves.
- Don't overload your washer. Clothes need room to move and enough water to carry away the soil.
- Follow product instructions. Use the recommended amount of detergent and other laundry products, and follow the recommended procedures.

Visit FTC's web site (www.ftc.gov) to view the News Release and Consumer Alert. Visit SDA's web site (www.sdahq.org) for information on good laundry practices and stain removal. ■

MOISTURE PATROL FOR ASTHMA CONTROL

Moisture Attracts Allergens

Whether the cause is a leaking pipe or the humid conditions of attics and basements, moisture in the home can provide the water source for mold, mildew, cockroaches and dust mites to thrive. And it doesn't take much. For example, a cockroach only needs about a drop of water a day to survive. The Soap and Detergent Association is alerting consumers to moisture problem areas and offering ideas for keeping them under control.

Appliances that control the atmosphere, such as humidifiers, dehumidifiers, unvented heaters and air conditioners, have water pans that should be emptied regularly. Places where moisture condenses should be wiped dry. Make sure air conditioning drain pans are pitched for effective drainage. During high humidity times, clean and disinfect humidifiers at least weekly.

Refrigerators can also create moisture problems. Check the gaskets, the condenser unit, drip pans and inside where moisture can condense. At least once a month, clean and disinfect the water collection pans belonging to all these appliances, following the user's guide for each appliance for specific cleaning instructions.

Using appliances properly is also important. Too much humidity makes it possible for mold and mildew to multiply. Too little humidity can cause nasal passages to dry out, which can aggravate asthma and allergy symptoms. To reduce dust mites and mold while maintaining a good comfort level, keep the indoor relative humidity between 35 and 50 percent. To measure the relative humidity, consider bringing in a professional heating and air conditioning service. A yearly checkup of the heating and/or cooling systems by these same professionals is also recommended. The inspector should assure that the system is properly sealed, is not drawing air from crawl spaces or other dusty areas, contains no water in the ductwork and that the condensate is draining properly.

Fans and proper ventilation will also help keep moisture at bay. Use exhaust fans when cooking, bathing or showering. Make sure all heating and water heating appliances, dryers and bathroom fans are properly vented. If possible, vent bathroom fans outside, not into the attic — blowing moist air into an attic will promote mold growth.

The situation in dark, damp or humid areas, such as basements and attics, can be improved by increasing air circulation, temperature and light. However, the best treatment for these spaces is to locate and eliminate the source of dampness. To check for signs of leaks and mold growth, look for stains and streaks on walls, ceilings and floors. Telltale signs include bubbles in paint and plaster, or loose wallpaper. Check all exposed pipes for water or moisture condensation, rust or mineral deposits. These are signs of past or present leakage. Inspect the inside frames and sills of all windows where moisture might be collecting.

Carpets can be problematic, too. Examine them for any signs of moisture, giving basement carpets particular scrutiny. Note that basement carpeting should never be installed on an unsealed cement slab, as the cement can conduct moisture and promote condensation. Check the wood tack strips under the carpet for dry rot, mold or rust around the tacks. If the carpet gets wet or needs to be cleaned, call in a carpet cleaning professional. Carpeting and furniture should be removed from any room that is prone to flooding or leaks.

Although basements and attics are the logical place to store items, this practice creates problems for allergy and asthma sufferers. The stored items collect dust and allergens that trigger health problems. To help keep the dust under control, store household items in closed cloth bags or plastic boxes. Be sure there is good air circulation around them and that they are stored off the floor and away from outside walls.

The warm, dark atmosphere in basements and attics is a welcoming environment for dust mites and cockroaches. In addition to moisture control, there are additional ways to discourage them. Do not store household items in cardboard boxes or paper bags. Wood and cellulose products can hold moisture, which attracts the cockroaches. ■



MISCELLANY

Baked to Perfection

When the editor of a leading gourmet cooking magazine set out to test a variety of baking sheets, the results were quite interesting, notes The Soap and Detergent Association. The same cookies were baked on three types of sheets — insulated sheets, sheets with sides and sheets without sides. Nonstick sheets were included in each category. The outcome showed that high cost is not necessarily related to high performance.

For easy cookie removal, insulated baking sheets turned out to be the most satisfactory. Cleanup, however, was more difficult. Cookie sheets with sides produced the most evenly baked cookies, but the resulting product was a little dry. Sheets without sides performed similar to the insulated ones, but the cookies tended to be a bit too brown.

Regardless of category, lighter and shinier baking sheets consistently produced moist, golden cookies. Cookies baked on sheets with darker coatings were a darker color and had a less soft texture.

Filtering Out Allergens

Although vacuum cleaner filters are not a new idea, recent improvements are a boon to those who suffer from allergies and asthma. Targeted pollutants include allergens such as smoke, pollen, dust mites, animal dander, cockroach droppings, mold and mildew.

New developments have produced HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air) filters that, according to manufacturer claims, trap more than 99 percent of all particles down to one micron in size. ULPA (Ultra Low Particulate Air) filters, which are equivalent to those used in semiconductor manufacturing clean rooms, are even more efficient, capturing particles to 0.1 microns.

Retaining the dirt in the bag and not expelling it back into the air or onto the carpet is of primary concern, says The Soap and Detergent Association. Innovations include foam seals to insure that all the air flows through the filter and into the exhaust and high velocity airflow systems that suck dirt directly into the bag.

High Tech Hair Care

Sales in the hair care market are healthy and constant but growth is relatively flat. To counteract this, some manufacturers are focusing on products that help repair and maintain healthy locks, observes The Soap and Detergent Association. Market segmentation is an important strategy for sales growth. As a result, many of these new products are part of branded, upscale lines aimed at women over 35 who tend to color their hair more and have a higher disposable income.

Innovations include a hair dryer that automatically senses whether the user's hair is getting too hot and adjusts the temperature accordingly, a steam straightener, and a combination curling iron and shaping brush that uses a moisturizing steam mist to protect hair from damage. Comfort features include rubberized, softer handles for a better grip.

Manning Her Wardrobe

Menswear favorites are showing up with great frequency in the wardrobes of women who crave comfort and fashion. Items to note include guys' 501 jeans, aviator watches, boxer shorts, ties, baseball caps and cotton dress shirts. The resulting look is practical, relaxed and sexy.

Often the wearer gives the look her own dose of femininity, such as a man's tailored suit worn with a camisole and high heels, or a tie that functions as a belt rather than a neck adornment.

Fit is important, emphasizes The Soap and Detergent Association. Since men's clothes are not designed to accommodate the curves of a woman's body, some fashion experts recommend belting or tying the item in, or having it altered. These same experts urge women to shy away from oversized men's apparel, which tends to make the wearer appear larger. As an indication that women are heeding this advice, several menswear manufacturers and retailers are seeing a heavy demand for small and medium sizes in items with cross-gender appeal. ■

WHAT'S NEW?

Protect fine furniture from moisture rings and scratches with Plant Mats. These durable, water-resistant plastic mats come in 6-inch and 8-inch round and octagonal shapes to fit under the common sizes of houseplant containers. Reversible designs provide decorating flexibility. (Conimar Corp.; PO Box 1509; Ocala, FL 34478-1509)

Toaster ovens are regaining their popularity. As a result, the Compact/Toaster Ovenware line was developed to increase cooking flexibility. Nonstick, three-ply aluminized steel options go far beyond the aluminum sheet that is the toaster oven's standard accessory. The line includes a baking cookie sheet, a deep casserole pan, a crisping pan, a Bundt-style cupcake pan and a grill pan. (Nordic Ware: Hwy. 7 at 100; Minneapolis, MN 55416)

The HEM-609 Wrist Blood Pressure Monitor is designed for comfort and efficiency. Thanks to fuzzy logic technology, the monitor cuff automatically inflates to a degree appropriate to the user. This eliminates the guesswork that can lead to overinflation errors and discomfort. Controlled deflation insures a smooth release. (Omron Healthcare, Inc.; 300 Lakeview Pkwy.; Vernon Hills, IL 60061)

Sleek style and a great seal characterize a new line of stainless steel jars. The lids incorporate a flexible rubber gasket ring that creates a tight fit to keep air and unwanted aromas from mixing with the jar's contents. The jars are available in eight sizes to suit a range of functions and storage needs. Black, stainless steel and glass lids are available, depending on the purposes of the jars. (Rosle; 204 Quiglex Blvd.; New Castle, DE 19720) ■

----- SDA ORDER FORM -----

Managing Allergies and Asthma: A Consumer Cleaning Guide

A 16-page brochure with tips on the top four cleaning strategies (Launder, Control Mold and Mildew, Clean Up Food and Clean Carpets) that can help control allergens in the home.

Please send _____ (up to 100 copies free) of *Managing Allergies & Asthma* to:
(contact SDA for larger quantities)

Name _____ Title _____

Affiliation _____ Phone _____ Fax _____

Address _____
City State Zip

Send orders to: CLF Brochures - MAA; The Soap and Detergent Association
475 Park Avenue South; New York, NY 10016
FAX: 212-213-0685; E-mail: order@sдахq.org; Phone: 212-725-1262 X221





“KEEP IT CLEAN” BRIEFS

Mold and mildew can trigger asthma attacks, thus they need to be controlled. Mold/mildew make themselves very evident in tile grout and on shower curtains; but, there are also three hidden areas where they live and release their allergenic spores into the air:

- around window frames and sills,
- under sinks,
- where the tub or shower meets the floor.

To help prevent mold/mildew growth, keep these areas clean and dry.

Mold and mildew grow in soap scum. Use a soap scum remover to keep the “ring around the bathtub” away, and you’re practicing good allergen defense.

There are three ways to control mold and mildew:

- Remove It. Use a *mildew remover* to remove mildew and its stains.
 - Kill It (Disinfect). Use products that say they control or prevent the growth of mold and mildew: *disinfectants* or *disinfectant (antibacterial) cleaners*.
 - Prevent It. Use a *disinfectant* or *disinfectant (antibacterial) cleaner* two to three times a week to prevent mildew’s return.
-

Cleaning products that disinfect (kill organisms) are regulated by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Look for the EPA registration number to verify that the product is a disinfectant.

Disinfectant products must be in contact with a surface from 30 seconds to 10 minutes in order to work properly. Read the label for specific information about using a product effectively. ■

The Soap and Detergent Association
475 Park Avenue South
New York, New York 10016

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

