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kw health connection

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CLEANING YOUR AIR

As Ontarians we stay inside during the winter months. Windows shut, heat or fireplace on. We are nice and warm and cozy. Recently the EPS (US Environmental Protection Agency) ranked indoor air pollution as one of the top five threats to public health. What does this mean? Basically it means there is not enough 02 and too many chemicals in our indoor air.

We all know from elementary school that CO2 concentration builds up in a closed room and that plants naturally convert CO2 to O2. But what are the other chemicals in our air and how can we get rid of them.

According to the EPA the top 3 house hold chemicals are Formaldehyde, Benzene and Trichloroethylene. Where are these chemicals hiding? We certainly don't see them, or smell them for that matter.

Formaldehyde is used as urea-formaldehyde found in foam insulation (UFFI), particle board, pressed wood, waxed paper, grocery bags and some common paper products. It is also sprayed as a resin on stiffener, wrinkle resister, water repellant, fire retardant, and adhesive binder in floor coverings, carpet backing, and permanent-press clothes. Other agents that have this resin include many common household cleaning agents, cigarette smoke and heating and cooking fuels such as natural gas and kerosene.

Benzene is commonly found in plastic items, paints, rubber, detergents and dyes.

Trichloroethylene (TCE) is commonly found in dry cleaning, printing inks, paints, lacquers varnishes and adhesives.

Why do we need these chemicals?

The materials that are used to build with have changed over the past few decades. Builders and manufacturers use pressed wood and fiber board instead of natural wood. Household furnishings have changed with more pressed board, plastic, and artificial fibers being used. Soaps and cleaners, insecticides, glues, air fresheners, shoe polish and numerous health care and personal grooming products add even more synthetic chemicals to the air in our homes.

Air fresheners contain perfumes and fragrances which are high in styrene. A recent study exposed mice to air fresheners for one hour. The mice demonstrated increased sensory irritation, increased pulmonary irritation, decreased airflow velocity and increased behavioural abnormalities.

What Can We Do About It?

We can start by minimizing exposure through the products we choose to buy and start using green household products. If a green dry-cleaning facility is in your area make good use of it or air out your dry cleaning in the garage or well ventilated area for 48 hours.

We can also use plants to clean the air for us. Dr. B C Wolverton has written a great book called *"How to grow fresh air: 50 Household plants that purify your home or office".*

Among these plants are:

Areca Palm (*Chrysalidocarpus lutescens*). This plant is highly effective at consuming CO2 and converting it to O2.

Money Plant (*Epipermnum aureuim*) removes formaldehyde from the air

Rubber Plant (*Ficus robusta)* removes formaldehyde from the air

Lady Palm (*Rhapis excels)* removes TCE.

NASA (The National Aeronautics and Space Administration) began researching the benefits of plants and indoor air quality. There are currently hundreds of published scientific reports and findings that validate the importance of plants in homes and the work place. Befriend a Palm today!

Special Thanks to Dr. Emina Jasarevic in Vancouver.

KW HEALTH CONNECTION OFFERS

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Your Connection to Living Well

We are entering the middle of winter, and even though this year has been considerably easier to endure than the last one it is still getting cold and snowy.

Some of us winter enthusiasts are having a great time with the snow and outdoor rinks, but many others are in full hibernation mode and only see the outdoors from the house to the car.

With that in mind, your 'connection to health' challenge is to don the toques and mukluks and get outside for 30-60 minutes 3 times per week for the entire month.

Build a snowman with the kids, go for a hike on the snowy trails, a skate on the outdoor rinks or always a favorite tubing at the tube park or sledding down the nearest hill. Let's just get outside and enjoy some fresh air.

*Look for our **Naturopathic** Doctor out in the Community February 17th at the Doon Mills Pharmacy for Celiac Awareness and Gluten Allergy Testing!*

260 Doon South Drive 519-894-4000

www.doonmillspharmacy.com

Your Health… Your Recipe!
Curried Butternut Squash Soup

1Tbsp butter

2 large onions chopped

2cloves garlic chopped

2Tbsp fresh parsley chopped

1 ½ tsp curry powder

5 cups butternut squash peeled and cubes

2 ½ cupsvegetable or chicken flavored broth

1 ½ cups organic milk or soy milk

½ tsp sea salt

Pinch pepper

Optional chopped red pepper, Raw almonds, chopped and toasted

- In large saucepan melt butter over medium heat. Add onion, garlic and curry powder. Cook, stiring frequently, about 8 mins or until onions are soft
- Add squash and continue stirring for 2 minutes
- Add stock and bring to boil. Cover, reduce heat to medium-low, simmer and cook until squash is tender
- Remove from heat and allow to cool
- Blend or put in food processor in batches until smooth
- Transfer to saucepan, stir in milk, salt and pepper
- Re-heat over medium heat
- Serve garnished with almonds and chopped red peppers

If you like this recipe visit www.bmsresources.ca/detail/2612/Simply_Healthy_Cookbook/

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