



What's lurking in your home?

New video series shows how to create a healthier home

Could a healthier home help you and your family breathe easier?

More than half of the respondents in a recent Sensitive Choice survey named dust as one of their major challenges in creating a healthy home – but there are hidden asthma and allergy triggers lurking all around our homes.

“The effect of dust can be immediate and obvious, such as uncontrollable sneezing when you fling open old curtains. Yet dust and other triggers around the home can be the hidden cause of more concerning health impacts, such as flare-ups in asthma or allergies,” said Siobhan Brophy from Sensitive Choice, a program by the National Asthma Council Australia.

“The good news is that there are many simple and effective ways to make your home healthier,” Ms. Brophy said.

To help you identify and tackle the hidden triggers in your home, Sensitive Choice has launched a series of 12 one-minute Healthy Homes videos. These informative videos walk you through a typical family home and discuss the major trigger points for asthma and allergies, and provide practical ways in which you can make your home healthier – like getting rid of dust!

Ms. Brophy said the video series covers all the main rooms of the house, as well as outdoor areas and pets. It highlights the best strategies for tackling the triggers in each room.

“The lounge room video, for example, features dusting and cleaning tips for different allergens, plus the types of products you should and shouldn't be using,” she said.

Understanding your family's asthma and allergy triggers is important. You can then focus your efforts on the things that will make the most difference.

Here are the Sensitive Choice *Healthy Homes* video series' top tips:

- Try to work out what's causing the problem and deal with it at the source. For example, keep pets out of the bedroom of any allergic family member.
- Avoid feather dusters and dry dusting cloths, which just stir up the dust. Use a damp or electrostatic cloth, as these trap the dust on the cloth.
- Look for vacuum cleaners with a good filter, like a HEPA filter. For hard floors like timber or tiles, use a damp, electrostatic or steam mop.
- Use cleaning products with fewer harsh chemicals and no fragrances. White vinegar is better than bleach for getting rid of mould.

- When purchasing a new appliance such as an air-conditioner or humidifier, make sure it's a good match for your specific needs (e.g. target allergen, room type and size, product features)
- Consider specific strategies to tackle your individual triggers, such as dust mite covers on bedding.

If you have asthma or allergies, ideally get someone else to do the cleaning for you as most cleaning will still stir up some dust and allergens. If you can, stay out of the room during cleaning and for at least 20 minutes afterwards.

Australia has one of the highest incidences of allergy in the world, with more than four million people affected. One in ten Australians has asthma.

You can watch the Sensitive Choice Healthy Homes videos at www.sensitivechoice.com

For more information on products and services that may be a better choice for people asthma and allergies, visit the Sensitive Choice website: www.sensitivechoice.com

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For further information, or to arrange an interview with a National Asthma Council Australia spokesperson, please contact:

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