



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Neil Schachter, M.D. is available for interviews.

CREATE A HEALTHIER HOME FOR YOUR FAMILY

Tips for Giving Your Home a Clean Air 'Check-Up'

ST. PAUL, Minn. – April 24, 2009 – Most of us are aware that outdoor air pollution, such as vehicle exhaust, ozone, dirt, soot and smoke, can create significant environmental and air quality concerns. However, indoor levels of some pollutants may be two to five times higher than outdoor levels. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has identified indoor air pollution as one of the top five urgent environmental risks to public health¹.

“Many people don’t realize that their home can be a breeding ground for allergens, such as pollen, dust mite debris, mold spores and other particles that may be airborne. Other things in the air, such as chemicals from everyday household items like furniture, carpeting, paints and cleaning products, can also contribute to poor indoor air quality. For people who are sensitive to these types of things, irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, headaches, dizziness and fatigue may result,” said Neil Schachter, M.D., past president of the American Lung Association of the City of New York and author of *Life and Breath*. “A ‘home health check-up’ combined with some simple changes can help make your home a healthier place to live.”

Follow these tips from Dr. Neil Schachter to give your home a healthier boost:

1. **Avoid cleaning products with ammonia and chlorine** –Some household chemicals may be irritants to the respiratory tract in people who are sensitive to these chemicals. They can cause watery eyes and sore throats and even can trigger coughing and shortness of breath. Choose milder yet effective cleaning aids like those that use baking soda, vinegar, hydrogen peroxide and citrus oils.
2. **Houseplants...a clean air ally** – Some common indoor houseplants, such as bamboo plants, English ivy and peace lily, can provide a natural way to help fight against rising levels of indoor air pollution by absorbing some potentially harmful gases². A six-inch potted green plant can clean a room of excess carbon dioxide in eight hours³.
3. **Lay area rugs instead of wall-to-wall carpeting** – Wall-to-wall carpeting can attract and hold indoor dirt, pollen, pet hair and mold spores and many contain chemicals. Vacuuming can remove some surface dirt, but often, the vacuum can actually push pollutants deeper into carpet fibers. Area rugs are best since they can be picked up and cleaned thoroughly.
4. **Use high performance air filters** – Use a high performance filter, like the Filtrete 1” Advanced Allergen Reduction Filter from 3M, to help capture particles such as pollen, smoke, dust mite debris and pet dander from the air that passes through the filter. Be sure to change your filter at the start of every season.

- More -

¹ American Lung Association: <http://www.lungusa.org/site/pp.asp?c=dvLUK9O0E&b=107829>

² *Interior Landscape Plants for Air Pollution Abatement*. National Aeronautics and Space Administration report 1989.

³ Greene, Alan MD. *Raising Baby Green* (Jossey-Bass)

5. **Restrict your furry friends** – People who are allergic to cats and dogs are actually allergic to the dander that pets shed. To help minimize exposure to pet dander, keep pets out of the bedroom and especially off the bed.
6. **Turn up the air conditioning** – Air conditioners not only cool the air in your home, they can also help reduce humidity levels. During the warm months of the year, turn up the air conditioner to help keep humidity levels lower, which can help keep mold from growing.
7. **Turn off the humidifier** – Room air humidifiers are moisture-generating sources that can spread bacteria, mold spores and chemical deposits into the air in your home. Keep relative humidity between 30% and 50% to help prevent mold growth.
8. **Leave shoes outside** – Avoid bringing outdoor pollutants indoors by removing your shoes before entering the home. Wearing shoes indoors can track particles that can become airborne, including animal dander, mold spores, pollen and bacteria.

Test your knowledge of other indoor air quality facts and blow away some fictions by playing Clean Air Fact or Fiction at www.filtrete.com/factorfiction.

-30-

About Neil Schachter, M.D.

Neil Schachter, M.D. is considered one of the leading authorities on respiratory disease in the United States. Professor of Medicine and Community Medicine and Medical Director of the Respiratory Care Department of the Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York City, Dr. Schachter has served as president of the American Lung Association of the City of New York, the Connecticut Thoracic Society and the National Association of Medical Directors of Respiratory Care. He has authored of six books on pulmonary disease, and contributed to 16 chapters in medical textbooks and more than four hundred articles and abstracts in peer-reviewed journals.

About 3M

A recognized leader in research and development, 3M produces thousands of innovative products for dozens of diverse markets. 3M's core strength is applying its more than 40 distinct technology platforms – often in combination – to a wide array of customer needs. With \$24 billion in sales, 3M employs 79,000 people worldwide and has operations in more than 60 countries. For more information, visit www.3M.com.

Contact:

Melissa Kuhn, Hunter Public Relations
(212) 679-6600, ext. 223
mkuhn@hunterpr.com
or
Katherine Hagmeier, 3M
(651) 575-4368

From:

3M Public Relations and Corporate
Communications
3M Center, Building 225-1S-15
St. Paul, MN 55144-1000

3M and Filtrete are trademarks of 3M. © 3M 2009