



## The Most Overlooked Way to Support Immune Health: Improve Indoor Air Quality!

### Message from Milly

Cool weather greetings to all,

This time of year there's one health issue on everyone's mind: how can I stay healthy during cold and flu season?

Throughout the years, I've written volumes on the best immune-supportive supplements, homeopathics, foods, and lifestyle practices...which are all very important!

**But today, we'll focus on an often-overlooked aspect of immune health: indoor air quality.** Because the truth is, you can take all the best supplements and eat all the best foods in the world, but if your home's air is sub-optimal, your immune system will be in a near-constant state of stress.

Fortunately, the air quality of our homes is largely within our control. All we need to do to improve it is first: become aware of it, and then take steps to clean it up. Which is what we'll begin discussing today!

On another note, I'm thrilled to report we now have all our newsletters from last two years available for viewing and download on the website. You can [find them here under: Education--> Newsletters](#). There are lots of great topics to learn about, from *The Liver's Surprising Role in Weight-Loss* to *How to Heal from Burnout*, so I hope you find them useful.

Without further ado, here are 5 ways to drastically improve indoor air quality for better immune and overall health.

Blessings to all,

-Milly



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### Tip #1: Break up with fragrance

I realize this may sound extreme, and I know how wonderful good smelling things make us feel. However, synthetic fragrance is now known as the new "second



hand smoke"[1] because it is so harmful to our respiratory systems, endocrine systems, nervous systems...the list goes on and on.

In fact, a single fragrance found in your laundry detergent, dryer sheets, or body wash for example could contain dozens or even *hundreds* of potentially harmful chemical compounds, conveniently nestled under the label "fragrance".[2] It is for this reason that fragrance is one of the world's top allergens. Plus, many people experience mysterious symptoms due to fragrance sensitivity.

If you're someone who avoids chemicals in your food, water, etc. for the sake of your health I would suggest you add avoiding fragrance to that list TODAY.

Now, the tricky thing about fragrance is...it's everywhere. Even in "all natural" or "organic" products. So start slowly by eliminating it in the obvious places like: air fresheners, plug-ins, laundry detergent, dryer sheets, skin care, body care, baby care, hair care, cleaning products, dish detergent, and perfumes. Then going forward, look for fragrance-free products or those scented with only 100% pure essential oils.

It may take a little time and adjusting, but I promise once you go fragrance-free for a while you'll be astounded at how overpowering and offensive they smell when you come into contact with them again. It's a lot like switching from processed foods to unprocessed foods...then trying to eat/enjoy fast food again. You wonder how you ever truly enjoyed the unnatural stuff!

I've listed it in the references below, but [The Guardian wrote a revealing piece on the health perils for fragrance that's worth a read.](#)

### **Tip #2: Open your windows twice daily**

This old tradition is one of the simplest ways to enhance ventilation, reduce airborne contaminants, and bring clean, fresh air into your home.

For best results, open up as many windows as you can in the morning and again in the evening daily (even if it's hot, raining, freezing, etc.). And if you're sick, try to keep your windows cracked as long as you can manage it.

References:

1:

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237515678\\_Fragrance\\_in\\_the\\_Workplace\\_Is\\_the\\_New\\_Second\\_H](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237515678_Fragrance_in_the_Workplace_Is_the_New_Second_H)

### Tip #3: Replace chemical-based cleaners and laundry products with natural cleaners

Conventional chemical-based cleaners emit an astounding amount of poison into the air we breathe. Hence why they have the words "hazardous", "poisonous", "irritant", etc. directly on their labels.

But these poisons aren't just released into the air when we're cleaning.

Cleaning and laundry products continue off gassing their chemicals and fragrance while they're sitting under our sinks, in our cabinets, etc. Just think about the last time you walked down the cleaning and laundry aisle at the store. All those bottles are sealed, yet you smell them strong as if they were open, right?

I could spend several newsletters documenting the health detriments of these common chemicals, which have been linked to several types of cancers, developmental problems, endocrine disruption, respiratory illness, death, poisoning, migraines, nervous system disorders[1]...the list goes on and on.

The bottom line is: with all the excellent non-toxic options available, there's really no reason to continue using toxic cleaners.

Some of my favorite brands of human- and environmentally-safe cleaners are [Branch Basics](#) (one concentrate that cleans nearly everything...even laundry), Dr. Bronner's, and [Ecos](#). You can also use [EWG's Guide to Healthy Cleaning and App](#) to search products or find out your favorite products' toxicity score. You can also clean just about anything with distilled white vinegar, baking soda, hydrogen peroxide, essential oils, and castile soap. This is a [good recipe for homemade "soft scrub"](#) that uses just castile soap, baking soda, a touch of water, and grapefruit essential oil (or any essential oil you like). And plain old rubbing alcohol works great on mirrors.

One word of caution: many products labeled "all natural", "eco-friendly" or "plant-based" aren't always free from chemicals, so be sure to run them all through that EWG app!

### Tip #4: Vacuum and dust often

Simple house dust that settles on our floors and surfaces has been shown to harbor some pretty awful toxins, including heavy metals, phthalates, molds, microplastics, bacteria, and flame retardants (to name but a few).[3]

Fortunately, you can easily control this by vacuuming and dusting regularly. Just be sure you're using a duster or floor mop that actually traps the dust (like a microfiber cloth or duster) vs. moving it around.

Sources:

1: [https://www.ewg.org/guides/cleaners/content/cleaners\\_and\\_health/](https://www.ewg.org/guides/cleaners/content/cleaners_and_health/)



2: <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/9-ways-avoid-hormone-disrupting-chemicals>  
3: <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/household-dust-toxic-chemicals-from-common-products/>



*As always, the information in this newsletter is provided for educational purposes only and is not meant to replace the advice or care of your medical provider.*

*All the links to products are provided for educational purposes and are not affiliate links.*

## Tip #5: Consider a home air purification system

If you're ready to make a larger investment, a high-quality air purifier can make all the difference to your home's air quality.

You can get a whole-house air filtration system or stand-alone units, which are less expensive and great for bedrooms.

### A few tips:

- Avoid ionizers which attract dust and toxins, then drop them on the floor.
- Avoid ozone-emitting filters, which can cause headaches and other health issues.
- Look for low- to no-EMF, and non-"Smart" air purifiers, especially if using in your bedroom.
- Consider how often you'll have to change the filters, and how accessible/expensive replacements are.
- Keep in mind that whole house purifiers will need to be installed by an HVAC professional.
- If you go with a whole house air purifier, be prepared to change your air filters more often.

Branch Basics' co-founder (also a building biologist) Marilee Nelson wrote an excellent and thorough piece on [how to choose a quality air purifier](#). Which I'd recommend reading.