

Over 700,000 New Zealanders suffer from asthma and other respiratory illnesses, one of the highest rates in the world, and it's increasing!

Our checklists below have tips on how to maintain a healthy home, lifestyle, and manage your healthcare.

Environment

Living in a dry and warm environment is important to minimise asthma and allergies.

When choosing a new home or accommodation, check that it meets the following criteria:

- The home is smokefree**
- The home is well insulated**
- The heating is electric or flued gas heating to keep the home warm and dry**
- Check for mould growth around the home**
- There are extractor fans or windows to remove moisture in the bathroom and kitchen**
- That you can dry your washing outside, or that clothes dryers are vented to outside**
- There is adequate drainage around the house**



**Healthy homes
are dry, warm
and pollution-free**



Once living in your home, follow these tips to keep it healthy, dry, warm and pollution-free:

Keep moisture out

- ✦ Put lids on pots when cooking
- ✦ Use extractor fans where possible
- ✦ Open windows and doors to air out your home on fine days
- ✦ Remove mould using very diluted household bleach



Keep heat in

- ✦ Close curtains at night to keep the heat in
- ✦ Use draught stops under doors and on windows



Keep the air clean

- ✦ Let your family and friends know that your house is smokefree
- ✦ Limit the use of strong smelling cleaners, air fresheners and flysprays
- ✦ Keep dust to a minimum. Dust with a damp cloth or microfibre cloth
- ✦ Keep pets outside of your bedroom



Lifestyle

Physical activity improves lung capacity and increases blood flow to your muscles and joints. Maintaining a healthy weight is also important as being overweight can have serious effects on the lungs and breathing. Be sure to:

- Keep active and exercise regularly**
- Eat a balanced diet**
- Be smokefree**
- Minimise your stress levels**
- Know your asthma triggers and try to minimise them - these could be:**
 - ✧ Stress and/or anxiety
 - ✧ Change of environment
 - ✧ Allergens in your home/ office/ classroom
 - ✧ Mould spores
 - ✧ Dust
 - ✧ Cleaning products



Healthcare

It is important to build a partnership with your doctor or nurse and follow their advice. Be sure to have an action plan put together with your doctor if you have asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Follow our healthcare tips:

- Take your medications as prescribed**
- Visit your doctor regularly**
- Always wash your hands to reduce germs**
- Get a flu vaccination every March**



Sensitive Choice®

To help you identify asthma and allergy-aware products, community-conscious companies use the Sensitive Choice symbol on their packaging. You'll find the reassuring blue butterfly on hundreds of products – from bedding to building products, from cleaning agents to carpets, from air purifiers to vacuum cleaners.

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