

*Scientific Studies****Air Fresheners Pollute Indoor Air***

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MCSA

There are many indoor air quality factors that affect the health and comfort of occupants, including temperature, air circulation, radon, molds, personal fragrances, pesticides, formaldehyde, carbon monoxide, asbestos, ozone, smoke, cleaning chemicals, chemicals contained in furnishings, and other volatile organic compounds. Volatile organic compounds come from paints, solvents, pesticides, air fresheners, aerosol sprays, and adhesives, among others. Particulate pollution comes from dust, pollen, fireplaces, wood stoves, kerosene/gas heaters.

Indoor air quality is a growing concern with the rise of sick building syndrome. Poor indoor air quality may lead to higher levels of pollutants which may cause allergies, respiratory tract infections, eye and skin irritation, headaches, congestion, coughing, sneezing, dizziness, nausea, fatigue, loss of coordination, and may lead to other disorders including rhinitis, asthma, multiple chemical sensitivity, fibromyalgia, neuropathy, depression and damage to the liver, kidneys, and central nervous system,

Assessing indoor air quality is often difficult and requires quantitative comparisons of emissions from all sources in the building.

Researchers in Japan showed that the use of these household products, such as air fresheners, significantly influences indoor air quality and thus, health.

Indoor air quality declines when the use of air fresheners is employed. Air fresheners are made up of many toxic chemicals, including phthalates. Small

children and pets are at increased risk of health effects.

Since air fresheners merely add a fragrance to cover up odor, they are not required to keep a clean home. Odor can generally be removed by cleaning without the need for adding fragrance. Consumers should beware of products claiming to be "fragrance free" or "fresh scent" as they may contain masking fragrances or fragrances designed to smell like fresh air.

Baking soda absorbs odors and is a great cleanser that can be used like any powdered cleanser. Vinegar is a natural deodorizer. There are many other single ingredient cleansers that are inexpensive and better for both occupant health and the environment. Natural cleansers combined with overall reduction of indoor volatile organic compounds and particulates can greatly improve indoor air quality and thus, health.

For more information on indoor air quality, see:

Epidemiology - North Carolina Public Health

<http://www.epi.state.nc.us/epi/air.html>

The Environmental Protection Agency

<http://www.epa.gov/iaq/>

The American Lung Association

<http://www.lungusa.org/site/apps/links.aspx?c=dvLUK900E&b=36056>

Reference

Jinno H, Tanaka-Kagawa T, Obama T, Miyagawa M, Yoshikawa J, Komatsu K, Tokunaga H. Impact of air fresheners and deodorizers on the indoor total volatile organic compounds. *Kokuritsu Iyakuhin Shokuhin Eisei Kenkyusho Hokoku*. 2007;(125):72-8.