



January 2020

### To Keep the Bedroom Healthy, Keep on Dusting

The dust that accumulates on your furniture, floors and knickknacks has nothing to do with poor housekeeping. It's a natural and continual collection of stuff caused by microscopic dust mites, the breakdown of fibers from household fabrics and furniture, and human and animal dander (skin flakes).

The average house in the United States collects about 40 pounds of dust each year, says allergist William Berger, author of *Asthma and Allergies for Dummies*.



Dust is a large part of indoor air pollution, and dust can trigger allergies and asthma attacks.

Because people spend about 90 percent of their time indoors, exposure to dust is a significant health concern.

While you can't eliminate dust altogether, there are steps you can take to reduce its build-up. The first step is getting rid of clutter.

Things like books, clothing, and stuffed toys are big collectors of dust. So are pictures and posters hanging on the walls.

Molly Hooven, an EPA spokeswoman, suggests concentrating dust-fighting efforts on bedrooms, because you spend about one-third of your time there. Some things you can do:



#### Get Rid Of Dust Mites

- ◆ Remove extra furniture and any objects that will give dust mites a place to land on.
- ◆ Vacuum the bedroom carpet using a vacuum cleaner with a HEPA filter.

Vacuuming can eliminate dust mites that have settled on the floor.

- ◆ Clean surfaces such as your vanity, television, side tables and headboards with a damp cloth or a cleaning furniture polish.

- ◆ Close closet doors, which will help reduce dust collection on your clothes.
- ◆ Wash your bedding regularly. Use 140-degree water to eliminate dust mites.
- ◆ Place stuffed animals and fabric items that can't be machine-washed into plastic bags and freeze, which will kill dust mites. Then run through the dryer (no heat needed) for 10 minutes to shake out the dust and dead mites.



### Healthier Gums, Better Blood Pressure

Here's another reason to take care of your gums:

A recent British review of 81 studies found that in several of them, people with moderate to severe gum disease had 22 to 49 percent higher odds of having high blood pressure than people with healthy gums.

If you have gum disease, getting it treated may lower your numbers, researchers say. In 5 of 12 studies, doing so reduced systolic blood pressure (the top number) by three to 12 points and diastolic pressure by up to 10 points.

Gum-disease bacteria may increase inflammation, which can reduce blood vessel flexibility. That in turn may boost blood pressure.

Source: Cardiovascular Research, Sept. 24, 2019.



**HEALTHY GUMS**  
FOR A HEALTHY LIFE

## 10 Prostate Cancer Risks

Prostate cancer is the second most common cancer for men and almost always attacks older men (skin cancer is the most common).

About 60 percent of cases are diagnosed in men over 65 and rarely occurs before age 40.

Here are 10 risk factors for prostate cancer, according to Duke University News.

- ◆ **Race:** African-American men are more likely to develop prostate cancer and die from it than Caucasian men.
- ◆ **Family history:** Having a father or brother with prostate cancer increases your risk by as much as two or three times.
- ◆ **History of another cancer:** Melanoma, thyroid cancer, bladder cancer, lung cancer, or kidney cancer slightly increases your risk.
- ◆ **Height and weight:** Obese men are at risk of developing aggressive prostate cancer and of dying from their cancer. Taller men have an increased risk.
- ◆ **Smoking:** Heavy smokers have the highest risk.
- ◆ **Vitamin E supplements:** One study showed that men who took Vitamin E supplements had a 17 percent increased risk of prostate cancer.
- ◆ **Geography:** Men living in North America, the Caribbean, northwestern Europe, and Australia have a higher incidence of prostate cancer.
- ◆ **High-calcium diet:** High dietary intake of calcium from dairy products is implicated, though not in men whose calcium came from non-dairy sources.
- ◆ **High-in-fat diet:** Animal fat may increase risk of prostate cancer.
- ◆ **Abnormal changes in the prostate cells:** Abnormal cells that are not cancerous can suggest cancer elsewhere in the prostate, or lead to prostate cancer.

ABOUT  
**1/7**  
**MEN**   
 WILL BE DIAGNOSED  
 WITH PROSTATE CANCER  
 DURING HIS LIFETIME.



Unfortunately, prostate cancer symptoms occur only when it has reached an advanced stage. The symptoms can include trouble starting to urinate or an inability to urinate, increased urinary frequency, burning or painful urination, blood in the urine or semen, painful ejaculation, erectile dysfunction, and pain in the lower back, hips, or thighs, according to Duke University. These symptoms can occur from a condition other than prostate cancer.

See a physician for testing and cancer screening, especially if you have a family history of prostate cancer.

## Oatmeal for Your Heart Health

Many foods can help keep your heart at its best. Some keep your cholesterol in line, others help lower your blood pressure. Here is one that is easy to work into your daily food choices:

Oatmeal—Grandma called it roughage and we need plenty of it each day. Oatmeal is one way to get it.

Oats are nourishing whole grains and a great source of vitamins, minerals, and cholesterol-lowering fiber.

The FDA allows manufacturers of oats to make health claims about their products based on the grain in them, suggesting that a diet high in oats can reduce the risk of heart disease.

Research shows oats lower cholesterol levels, keep you regular, and may help prevent certain cancers.

1. A warm bowl of oatmeal fills the belly for hours with its high fiber content. Top it off with fruit (such as blueberries or strawberries) for added fiber, vitamins, and minerals.
2. Add oats whenever you bake. Substitute up to one-third of the flour with oats in pancakes, muffins, quick breads, cookies, and coffee cakes for an added dose of fiber.
3. Use oats in place of bread crumbs in dishes such as meatloaf, meatballs, or breading on poultry.



**Recipe idea:** Make your own crunchy granola by baking three cups of oats at 350 degrees for 25 to 30 minutes. Stir occasionally, then cool and mix in a variety of chopped dried fruit, nuts, and seeds.