

Indoor air pollutants and health effects

Pollutants	Sources		Health effects
Carbon monoxide	<p>Faulty, incorrectly installed, poorly maintained or poorly ventilated cooking or heating appliances which use fossil fuels, including gas, coal, wood or paraffin.</p> <p>Cigarette smoke</p> <p>Carbon monoxide from vehicle exhausts can reach the inside of the home if a vehicle is kept in an attached garage, or from nearby roads or parking areas.</p>		<p>At lower levels of exposure, mild effects are similar to the flu. These symptoms include headaches, dizziness, disorientation, nausea and fatigue. At moderate concentrations, angina, impaired vision, and reduced brain function may result. At higher concentrations, CO exposure can be fatal.</p>
Nitrogen dioxide	<p>Outdoor air, burning oil and wood inside, un-vented gas cookers and heaters and tobacco smoke.</p>		<p>General irritation to airways including increased chance of respiratory infection and impaired lung function.</p>
Particles	<p>Outdoor air, cooking, candle burning, burning of fuel in open hearths, smoking, fungal spores and fan heater use.</p>		<p>Respiratory and cardiovascular problems. Concerns about long-term effects.</p>
VOC's (volatile organic compounds)	<p>Air fresheners Hair sprays, Household products:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - cleaning products - moth repellents - solvents, paints and lacquers (and their thinners) - paint strippers - degreasers - wood preservatives - dry-cleaning fluids - building materials - home furnishings 	<p>Office equipment and products:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - copiers and printers - correction fluids and carbonless copy paper - graphics and craft materials including glues and adhesives - permanent markers and photographic solutions. 	<p>Long-term exposure can cause damage to the liver, kidneys and central nervous system. Short-term exposure to volatile organic compounds can cause eye and respiratory tract irritation, headaches, dizziness, visual disorders, fatigue, loss of coordination, allergic skin reactions, nausea, and memory impairment.</p>
Dust mites and other biological air pollutants	<p>Plants, bacteria, soil and plant debris, saliva and animal dander (from pets), humans.</p> <p>High humidity and poor ventilation and cleanliness can allow biological agents to grow and be released into the air.</p>		<p>Allergic reactions, hypersensitivity, allergic rhinitis and asthma.</p>
Mould	<p>Usually found in damp, poorly ventilated areas of homes, such as bathrooms or basements.</p>		<p>Increased risk of experiencing health problems such as respiratory symptoms, respiratory infections and asthma. Exposure to mould can also cause fungal infections, as well as lethargy, headaches and irritation to the eyes, skin, nose, throat and lungs.</p>
Tobacco smoke	<p>Smoking, second hand smoke</p>		<p>Eyes, nose and throat irritation, breathing problems, lung and other cancers, emphysema, chronic obstructive pulmonary diseases, cardiovascular diseases.</p>