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Ten Cleaning Tips to Combat Spring Allergies

ATLANTA—It's time to open the windows, break out the flip-flops, and start up the barbeque - spring is here. But for nearly 36 million Americans, the blooming of flowers and trees comes with a major buzz kill: allergies.

Natural allergies are getting more severe, increasing five percent per decade since the 1970s, affecting even those who have previously been allergy-free. Some of us are more sensitive than others when it comes to airborne allergens. There is evidence suggesting a link between certain chemicals found in some [home cleaning](#) products and breathing ability.

Marie Stegner, consumer health advocate for the Green Clean Certified® [housecleaning company](#) Maid Brigade, offers 10 cleaning tips on how to combat spring allergies. So step outside and enjoy the sunshine, minus the tissue box.

- 1. Replace cleaning products.** Choose natural [residential cleaning](#) products without harsh scents. Plain soap, water, salt, baking soda, vinegar, and lemon juice, along with a little elbow grease and a scrubbing sponge, can take care of many routine-cleaning tasks.
- 2. Air it out.** There is no replacement for good ventilation, so air out the house as weather permits and put on exhaust fans when cooking. Also use HEPA (high efficiency particulate air) purifiers and systems to remove airborne allergens and reduce symptoms caused by house dust allergies.
- 3. Spin cycle.** Bedding, comforters, curtains, towels and other soft surfaces trap dust mites. According to the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, dust mites are the most common trigger of allergies and asthma. Wash bedding, comforters, towels and curtains in hot water reaching at least 130 degrees Fahrenheit.
- 4. Scared of the dark?** Basements, vents and crawl spaces can hide and trap allergens and household dust, pushing them into clean areas of the home. These areas should be cleaned on a regular basis because they easily hide areas with high moisture and humidity, promoting mold growth and circulation of spores in the home.
- 5. Protect yourself.** Use a dust mask while cleaning if needed. This will limit the exposure to airborne allergens in the home and decrease allergy symptoms.

6. **Smart vacuuming.** Most [maid cleaning services](#) like Maid Brigade use HEPA vacuums when tackling home cleaning projects. Traditional vacuums put allergens back into the indoor air triggering house dust allergies while HEPA filter vacuums are designed to trap 99.7 percent of all small particles, such as allergens, and prevent their recirculation.
7. **Bedroom bookshelf solution.** Bookshelves collect dust and dust mites that can trigger symptoms like itchy eyes, congestion and sore throats. Get some relief by cleaning these spaces thoroughly at least once a week. For a more permanent solution, remove the bookshelves from the bedroom entirely.
8. **Air regulation.** Use dehumidifiers inside the home and change their filters regularly.
9. **Chill out.** Every time the refrigerator opens and closes, mold spores collected in the door seal are released into the air. As spilled liquids and food crumbs find their way into the crevices, mold begins to grow, which can trigger allergies. Kill these mold spores and relieve symptoms with a weekly cleaning. When wiping the seal down, use cotton swabs to get into the crevices where food, mold and dust collect.
10. **Wash and dry.** Dry all surfaces in the bathroom and kitchen after use, and check for leaks in the plumbing that can result in mold growth.

About Maid Brigade

Maid Brigade cares about the health of today's families. With more than 25 years of experience, the company is the national leader in green cleaning practices and has a longstanding legacy of offering the latest in maid services and technologies. Maid Brigade is the first and only Green Clean Certified® cleaning services franchise that implements a certification program for green house cleaning so customers know that they're getting a green cleaning that is safe and truly green. For more information on Maid Brigade or for more cleaning or healthy living tips visit www.maidbrigade.com, www.greenclean certified.com/greentv, or <http://blog.maidbrigade.com>.

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