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Cleaning Your Home to Control Allergens

Indoor allergens such as dust mites, pet dander, and mold can trigger allergy and asthma symptoms in millions of allergy sufferers. Carried in through the air, allergens can be found on furniture, floors, other surfaces around the house and throughout your ductwork. While no home can be completely allergen-free, thorough cleaning on a regular basis can help reduce the number of allergens to which you're exposed.

One of the best ways to control indoor allergens is by getting rid of dust. Dust mites, the most common trigger of asthma and allergy symptoms inside the home, thrive in dust. But be aware that dusting can actually make things worse by kicking up allergen particles into the air. Use a damp or treated cloth that attracts dust rather than scattering it, and consider wearing a dust mask when cleaning. Also, try to minimize clutter in your home, since it tends to collect dust.

Vacuuming, especially in areas that accumulate more dust, such as carpeting and furniture can help control allergens in your home. But as with dusting, vacuuming can also send dust particles into the air and cause problems for anyone with a dust mite allergy. Use a vacuum with a HEPA filter, which can trap small particles and prevent them from spreading into the air. Try to vacuum at least once or twice a week.

The protein found in the saliva, urine, and dander (dead skin flakes) of our pets is a common allergen for many people. These allergen particles can become airborne and trigger symptoms in those who are sensitive. You can reduce animal dander by vacuuming frequently and bathing your pet once a week.

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Dust mites tend to thrive in bedding, pillows, and throw rugs. And since we spend so much of our time in the bedroom, it's especially important to reduce allergens there. Once a week, wash pillowcases, sheets, and blankets in very hot water, at least 130 degrees, and dry them in a hot dryer to kill dust mites. Also, encase mattresses and non-washable pillows, comforters, and other bedding in allergen-proof covers.

Molds and mildew thrive in damp areas such as the bathroom and basement. Mold spores can also float in the air like pollen and trigger allergy symptoms. To minimize these allergens in the bathroom, replace wallpaper with tile or paint the walls with a mold-resistant paint. Run an exhaust fan after taking a shower or bath, and towel-dry the shower or bathtub itself. Take time to scrub away mold from tiles and bathroom surfaces and replace moldy shower curtains. If necessary run a dehumidifier to reduce moisture if it's damp.

Mold produces allergens, irritants and in some cases, potentially toxic substances. If Mold is suspected call Duraclean to "Get the Mold Out".

Many harsh chemicals found in common household cleaners can aggravate or trigger symptoms in people who have allergies and asthma. If you are sensitive to allergens, switch to green, environmentally friendly cleaning products, which have natural and plant-based ingredients.

An effective way to help rid these allergens in your home is to have your carpets, rugs, upholstery and air ducts cleaned professionally. Duraclean offers all these services including green products. Call Duraclean today for your cleaning needs.

Pumpkin Almond Cookies



Ingredients

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- 1-1/2 cups confectioner's sugar
- 1-1/4 cup pumpkin purée
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup almond meal
- 1 teaspoon sea salt
- 1-1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon allspice
- Drops of orange food coloring
- 2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- Almonds

Instructions

1. Line two baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In a large mixing bowl, combine the butter and powdered sugar. Mix for about a minute or so, until it's a bit lighter and very smooth.
3. Add in the pumpkin, vanilla, almond meal, salt, and spices. Mix until smooth. Add a few drops of orange food coloring.
4. Fold in the flour and mix only until it's evenly incorporated.
5. Shape dough into approximately 1-1/2 tablespoon-sized balls. Gently roll between the palms of your hands to create a smooth, even surface. Place them on one of the prepared baking sheets. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and refrigerate until the cookie batter balls are firm, at least 3 hours, and ideally overnight.
6. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.
7. Remove the baking sheet from the refrigerator and then use the back of a small knife to make several vertical lines in around each ball, all coming together at the top center. Make sure there's about an inch between each one.
8. Bake in the preheated 350 degree F oven until bottoms are slightly golden and the cookies are solid, about 15 minutes.
9. While the cookies are still quite warm, insert an almond to the top of each pumpkin where the lines meet to form the "stem."
10. Let the cookies cool on the baking sheets.



Autumn Scramble

Unscramble these autumn words below.

woeurflsn _____

weaerts _____

muatun _____

sveale _____

wocasecrr _____

rrseiuql _____

porcs _____

nsoeas _____

canors _____

cdaorrh _____

knipmup _____

lgaofie _____

nbofrei _____

ahvsetr _____

kear _____

eplap _____

If you would like the answers to this puzzle email cgillespie@duraclean.com

Fall DIY Projects



Fall Wreath

Greet guests with this alternative to a wreath. On the back side of an old tray use chalkboard paint and decorate with fall foliage.



Fall Decor

Add fall flavor to a tabletop or mantel with cylinder vases filled with nuts and wheat. Roll coordinating scrap-booking paper into decorative cuffs that slip inside the vase.



Leaf Candle Holder

Decoupage fall leaves to mason jars.



Autumn Bowl

Make this leaf bowl for your home this fall as a decoration or candy dish. With mod podge, glue overlapping layers of fall leaves to the bottom. Let dry and pop balloon.



Pinecone Birdfeeder

All you need is a pinecone, peanut butter and bird seed. Spread peanut butter on pinecone and roll in bird seed.



Hanging Vase

A swan gourd makes a natural vase hanging from a front gate or porch railing. Cut a hole near the gourd's neck, then hollow out enough space for fall flowers: mums, black-eyed Susans, Virginia creeper or other favorites.

Strange Facts

People talk in average speed of 120 words per minute.

Just like people, dogs and cats can be left-handed or right-handed.

Physically it is impossible to sneeze with opened eyes.

Every time you lick a stamp you're consuming 1/10 of a calorie.

There are only two days of the year when you can stand an egg on its end, the autumn and spring equinox. To do this you will need an egg. (It does not have to be hard-boiled.) Place the egg on a hard, flat surface on its largest end. Carefully pull your hands away and it should remain upright!

A quarter has 119 grooves on its edge, a dime has one less groove.

Fall Fitness

How many New Year's Eves have you spent sipping champagne and vowing to get more fit in the coming year? And how many times have you failed to follow through? Here are 5 ways to start making the most of the fall season. And who knows, this year, you might be in great shape before that New Year's Eve party rolls around.

1. Take advantage of the weather. Fall can be a treat for the senses: crisp air, apple picking, pumpkin carving, a canopy of fall foliage. This is a great time to exercise outdoors and enjoy cooler temperatures. Walking, hiking and cycling are all awesome in the fall.
2. Think outside the box. Always wanted to learn to tap dance? Attempt to box? Master the jump rope? Ask any schoolchild: Fall is a great time to learn something new.
3. Be an active TV watcher. Many people get geared up for their favorite television shows. If you're going to sit down and watch hours of TV, get moving, make a date with exercise and TV."

While you watch, you can walk or run in place, do standing lunges, tricep dips off the couch, or lift weights. Do push-ups or sit-ups during commercials.

4. Integrate exercise into your life. You already know the obvious suggestions: park farther away from your destination; take stairs instead of elevators; take a walk during your lunch break. If you're spending the afternoon at the kids soccer practice, instead of reading a book or visiting with another parent, why not walk around the outside of the field while they practice.
5. Rejuvenate yourself. Fall is the time to rejuvenate body, mind and spirit. Get a massage after your run. Learn to meditate. Take an art class. Treat yourself not just with exercise but other activities that promote wellness, so you can feel good physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually.