

HEALTH BEGINS AT HOME

[Announcer #1] CDC-TV presents ... Health Matters.

[Announcer #2] Home is where the heart is – where Americans experience more than half their lives - sharing their hopes, their dreams. For a majority of Americans health begins at home. Each year, home hazards cause millions of injuries and illnesses across the nation and many are preventable. A clean and safe home is where good health begins.

Many people think of pollution as something outside the home. Inside the home, dangerous particles in the air can make us sick. Secondhand smoke contains some 4,000 chemicals, including 250 that are toxic or cancer-causing. Secondhand smoke can cause heart disease and lung cancer in non-smoking adults and lung disease, ear infections, and Sudden Infant Death Syndrome in children. If you smoke, quit! Don't allow any smoking in the home. Cigarettes, cigars and other smoking materials are the leading cause of fire deaths in homes. To protect your family, install a smoke alarm on every floor, especially near bedrooms.

A clean and safe home also means an environment free of dangerous chemicals and germs. Proper hand washing and cleaning of kitchen utensils and food preparation surfaces help prevent the spread of germs that can cause illness. Cleaning can help prevent the entry of unwanted pests that often carry deadly diseases and trigger asthma attacks. Don't leave food or water out or clutter where they can nest.

When using chemicals, such as pesticides and household cleaning products, follow label instructions, use only when necessary, and keep out of reach of young children. To prevent poisoning from prescription and over-the-counter drugs, store medication safely in locked cabinets, follow dosing directions, and read warning labels.

Lead poisoning can delay a child's ability to learn, grow, and develop. Lead comes from lead paint chips ground into tiny bits that become part of the dust and soil. Learn if there are sources of lead in your home.

Poisoning also occurs from exposure to carbon monoxide gas. It is colorless and odorless and can kill you. A working CO detector placed near bedrooms can save lives.

Another harmful pollutant is radon gas. Radon has been linked to lung cancer. There are inexpensive home kits available to test for radon gas. If there are high levels, steps can be taken to reduce harmful radon.

Remember, good health begins at home. A clean, well-maintained home creates a healthy and safe environment for you and ones you love.