

Wellness Pointers

Emotional | Environmental | Financial | Mental | Occupational | Physical | Social | Spiritual

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Air Quality

We do not inherit
the earth from
our ancestors, we
borrow it from our
children.

~Native American Proverb



How To Have Good Air Quality at Work

Many people feel sick while they are at work and even sometimes after leaving the workplace. I use to be one of those people. I use to work as a office clerk at a old run down building. I would often have symptoms that would make it difficult for me to work. For example, common symptoms I experienced were headaches, runny nose, watery eyes and coughing. After a specialist came and checked out the place they found a mold that was causing the different symptoms that I and a few other employees were experiencing.

Research has found that the symptoms typically felt such as the headaches, coughing and watery eyes could do with the poor air quality at the work. According to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, "Almost 70 percent of the US workforce works in indoor office settings and over the last 20 years, more and more US workers, and office workers around the world, have reported symptoms related to their indoor environments." As you can see the air quality at work is not a healthy situation for workers. There are things you can do to help ensure good quality of the air at work.

Ask permission from your boss if you can have the workplace checkout by a professional for mold, asbestos and other bacteria that can contribute to the poor health of the employees. Your boss should see the importance of having the place inspected if not because of financial costs see if you can ask all the employees for donations. Let everyone know the inspection is well worth the price of health.

Place an air filter in your workspace. The air filter can help eliminate pollutes and bacteria that can contribute to poor health.

Dust the office frequently. Dust actually contributes to many unhealthy symptoms such as coughing. By dusting you are getting rid of germs and bacteria that tend to float in the air.

Keep windows open. This is beneficial if the location of your job is surrounding by trees and not the yucky pollution that comes from cars. Fresh air can keep the air circulating and moving which can help prevent the build up of germs and bacteria. During early morning hours is the best time to keep those windows open.

Get rid of unwanted items such as dead flowers, plant and spoiled foods. These things can cause poor quality in the air and contribute to unhealthy air.

Ask permission from your boss if you can have the workplace checked by a professional for mold, asbestos and other bacteria that can contribute to the poor health of the employ

Every week make it a habit to trash unwanted items.

These are some suggestions that can help bring about good air quality at work.

What are indoor air contaminants?

Here are examples of common indoor air contaminants and their main sources:

- Carbon dioxide (CO₂), tobacco smoke, perfume, body odours -- from building occupants.
- Dust, fibreglass, asbestos, gases, including formaldehyde -- from building materials.
- Toxic vapours, volatile organic compounds (VOCs)
-- from workplace cleaners, solvents, pesticides, disinfectants, glues.
- Gases, vapours, odours
-- off-gas emissions from furniture, carpets, and paints.
- Dust mites -- from carpets, fabric, foam chair cushions.
- Microbial contaminants, fungi, moulds, bacteria,
-- from damp areas, stagnant water and condensate pans.
- Ozone -- from photocopiers, electric motors, electrostatic air cleaners.



Symptoms

It is common for people to report one or more of the following symptoms:

- dryness and irritation of the eyes, nose, throat, and skin,
- headache,
- fatigue,
- shortness of breath,
- hypersensitivity and allergies,
- sinus congestion,
- coughing and sneezing,
- dizziness, and/or
- nausea.

People generally notice their symptoms after several hours at work and feel better after they have left the building or when they have been away from the building for a weekend or a vacation.

Many of these symptoms may also be caused by other health conditions including common colds or the flu, and are not necessarily due to poor air quality. This fact can make identifying and resolving air quality problems more difficult.

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suggestions to Wellness@southern.edu

“Never do things others can do and will do, if there are things others cannot do or will not do.”

Advice From An Old Tennessee Mountain Man



Fruit Salad with Poppy Seed Dressing

Ingredients:

1 cup halved green seedless grapes
1 cup quartered strawberries
1/2 cup blueberries
2 tablespoons sugar
1/4 cup fresh lime juice
1 teaspoon poppy seeds
1/4 cup unsalted pistachios, toasted

Directions:

Toss grapes, strawberries and blueberries with sugar in a medium bowl. Stir in lime juice, and poppy seeds. Let sit at room temperature for at least 1/2 an hour. Garnish with pistachios and serve.