

## A Clean Home Is a Healthy Home

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This tip sheet serves as a companion to the presentation "A Clean Home Is a Healthy Home."

### A Healthy Home Is Important

Most people spend a lot of their time at home. By helping the individuals you support keep their home clean, you can help make it a healthy place to live.



Keeping one's home cleaned regularly can improve the quality of the indoor air, reduce stress, improve mental clarity, and reduce the time to clean later.

People's homes seem safe, but sometimes dirty homes can be harmful. People can get sick from germs in the home, especially in kitchens and bathrooms. Too much moisture in homes can result in mold growth, which can also make people sick. Lots of clutter can create homes for cockroaches, rats, and mice. Drips or spills left on the floor can cause someone to fall and hurt themselves. Grease buildup in the kitchen can start a fire.

As a supporter, you should:

- **Be Informed** – Learn about things like pest control and mold prevention.
- **Be Practical** – Help the individual you support to set goals, and to focus on cleaning tasks that are doable.
- **Be Patient** - Give simple explanations, demonstrate what to do, and give as much assistance as the person needs.
- **Be Positive** - Help people to understand that having a clean home will make a real difference in their lives.

### Help the Individual You Support to Live in a Home That Is...

1. Mold-free
2. Pest-free
3. Bed bug-free
4. Stocked up on basic cleaning supplies
5. Cleaned routinely



### Having a Mold-Free Home

Mold can make people sick with a stuffy nose, sore throat, or worsened allergies. Mold grows in wet places, like kitchens and bathrooms.

**You can help the individual you support:**

- Keep things dry or use fans in moist areas;
- Watch for signs of mold growth, like black and green spots; and
- Check for plumbing leaks.

**Having a Pest-Free Home**

Pests, like cockroaches, ants, and mice, can make the air unhealthy, make food unsafe to eat, and damage homes.

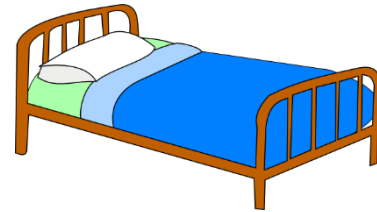


**You can help the individual you support:**

- Keep their home less cluttered;
- Keep pests out, such as sealing openings in walls;
- Remember to not give pests food, water, or a “home” like old boxes and other clutter;
- Watch for signs of pests, like odd smell, odd sounds, or dead bugs; and
- Get in touch with their landlord or exterminator.

**Getting Rid of Bed Bugs**

Bed bugs bite humans and animals. They usually live in or around beds.



**You can help the individual you support:**

- Remember to wash and change their sheets regularly;
- Remember to dust and clean floors every week;
- Watch for signs of bed bugs, like reddish or dark spots and tiny eggshells on their bed; and
- Get in touch with their landlord quickly.

**Having the Right Supplies**

**Make sure the individual you support is stocked up on basic cleaning supplies:**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sponges</li><li>• Cloths</li><li>• Paper towels</li><li>• Toilet brush ONLY for cleaning the toilet</li><li>• Scrub brush for other things</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rubber gloves</li><li>• Broom for floors</li><li>• Mop for floors</li><li>• Vacuum for carpets</li><li>• Dishwashing liquid</li><li>• All-Purpose Cleaner spray</li></ul> |
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## Having a Cleaning Routine

Everyone should try to clean their home weekly.

### You can help the individual you support:

- Develop their cleaning checklist with items for each kind of room:
  - Kitchen
  - Bathroom
  - Bedroom
- Come up with a plan, like having a designated cleaning day every week or committing to cleaning one part of their home each day.



## Pets Need a Clean Home Too!

### You can help the individual you support remember to:

- Keep pet food separate from people food.
- Store pet dishes, utensils, and can openers separately.
- Wash their hands after touching their pet, their pet's food, toys, cages, litter boxes, and after picking up animal waste.
- Clean litter boxes for cats every day or so.
- Pick up waste in a plastic bag and throw the bag in the garbage.
- Wash pet food bowls every day.



## Additional Resources

- From the National Institutes of Health (NIH):  
<https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2016/12/making-healthier-home>
- Psychology Behind Cleanliness:  
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-truisms-wellness/201607/the-powerful-psychology-behind-cleanliness>