

Use safer cleaning products

These simple tips will reduce your family's exposure to potentially hazardous chemicals commonly found in the home.

Tip 1 Clean regularly; use fewer cleaning products less often

The best way to avoid chemicals of concern is to use fewer cleaning products in smaller amounts and use products less often.

It's generally a good idea to make sure you clean your home frequently in order to reduce the build-up of dust.

House dust has been found to have quite high levels of a range of problematic chemicals, including phthalates, brominated flame retardants and bisphenols.

Tip 2 Use environmentally friendly products

Check labels of cleaning products carefully and choose environmentally friendly products that don't contain potentially harmful chemicals. Choose products with independent ecolabels such as the EU Eco label or the soil association

Tip 3 Avoid using cleaning agents containing antimicrobials.

Avoid products which contain antimicrobial compounds such as triclosan or triclocarban – there is no evidence they are more effective than other cleaning products, and there are concerns over their safety - both from an environmental and a health perspective. Triclosan is an EDC which affects oestrogen and thyroid hormones. Furthermore, use of products containing triclosan may select for antibiotic resistant bacteria.

Tip 4: Choose fragrance free cleaning products

Ingredients labelled as fragrance or parfum may include many different chemicals, including hormone-disrupting compounds such as phthalates and synthetic musks (e.g. Tonalide).

It's safest to opt for washing powder, air fresheners or cleaning products that are fragrance-free or contain natural fragrances, such as essential oils.

Tip 5 Make your own

Many websites have suggestions on how to make your own cleaning products. Here are a few suggestions

<https://thegreenparent.co.uk/articles/read/make-your-own-cleaning-products>

<https://friendsoftheearth.uk/natural-resources/homemade-cleaning-products-5-fantastic-recipes>

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