



## HEALTHY HOME HEALTHY CHILD: KNOW YOUR KITCHEN



1

**Warning!** Mercury is present in some kinds of fish.

**Why?** Exposure to mercury can cause neurological problems, may damage unborn children, and increase risk of miscarriage.

**Take Action:**

1. Buy fish low in mercury, including catfish, flounder, haddock, hake, mackerel, pollock, salmon, tilapia, trout, squid, crabs, and shellfish.
2. Try to avoid mackerel (king), marlin, orange roughy, shark, swordfish, tilefish, tuna (bigeye, ahi)
3. When fishing in local areas check current advisories from New York State Department

2

**Treasure!** Eat The Best, Leave The Rest. Fast food, processed, packaged foods are often low in the vitamins and minerals you need, and high in salt and fat.

**Why?** Foods low in vitamins and minerals and high in fat and salt contribute to diseases like heart disease, diabetes, obesity, and cancer.

**Take Action:**

1. Eat fresh fruit or vegetables in every meal—5 servings a day
2. Cook with dried beans, lentils, and rice—they are healthy, BPA-free, and much less expensive.
3. Eat dinner together as a family at least 3 times a week.
4. Join community supported agriculture (CSA) or shop at a farmers market in your neighborhood. Contact NYC Grow for details: 212-788-7900

3

**Warning!** Lead is often found in the home in toys, children's jewelry, some imported decorated pottery, tap water from old pipes, window blinds, and old paint.

**Why?** Lead exposure causes brain damage that impairs intelligence, decreases reaction time, and results in poor coordination and behavioral problems.

**Take Action:**

1. Buy children's toys and coloring materials that are labeled lead-free.
2. Make sure all surfaces in your apartment are covered in latex-based paint.
3. Run water until cold before drinking or cooking. Never use hot water out of the tap for cooking or hot drinks.
4. Call 311 to learn more about New York City's Lead Poisoning Prevention Program or order a test kit at [http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/drinking\\_water/lead\\_test\\_kit.shtml](http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/html/drinking_water/lead_test_kit.shtml)
5. Call WE ACT (212) 961-1000 to test your home for lead.

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**Warning!** Indoor Air Pollution. Fresh indoor air is important for your family's health.

**Why?** Many of the toxic chemicals in the home, like allergens, pesticides, and tobacco smoke, are carried in the air.

**Take Action:**

1. Leave windows open in good weather to allow indoor air to be replaced by fresh outdoor air.
2. However, if the outdoor air pollution index is high, keep windows closed until conditions improve.
3. Keep indoor air fresh by not allowing smoking or use of spray pesticides.

5

**Treasure!** Toxic-free Cleaning. Regular cleaning with non-toxic cleaners can keep your family healthy and home fresh.

**Why?** Many household cleaners use artificial fragrances and harsh cleansing agents like bleach, ammonia and acids which produce indoor air pollution. Regular cleaning with non-toxic cleaners can help reduce pest allergens, and other pollutants found hidden in dust.

**Take Action:**

1. Make homemade cleaners using ingredients found at home: baking soda, vinegar, lemon juice, tea tree oil, salt, club soda, and corn starch. Website for recipes: <http://www.thedailygreen.com/green-homes/latest/green-cleaning-spring-cleaning-460303>
2. Dust and mop regularly with a damp cloth.
3. Open a window while cleaning.

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**Warning!** Phthalates are found in plastic toys, shower curtains, and cosmetics & personal care products like lipstick, nail polish, perfume, hair spray, and body lotion.

**Why?** Scientists are still studying the full range of health effects caused by phthalates. So far, we know that phthalates alter children's growth, impact the male reproductive system, and trigger asthma.

**Take Action:**

1. Use fragrance-free personal care products by avoiding labels with: DBP, DEP, DEHP, BzBP, DMP, or the word "fragrance".
2. Choose plastics with the recycling code 1, 2, 4 or 5 and avoid recycling labels 3, 6, and 7.
3. Try toys made from wood, cotton or wool.
4. Use cloth shower curtains.

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**Warning!** Pesticides. Pesticides and household cleansers contain toxic chemicals that get into the air and kitchen dust.

**Why?** Some pesticides harm children before they are born and during early childhood, resulting in smaller newborns and developmental delays in young children.

**Take Action:**

1. Use bait and gel pesticides instead of sprays. Sprays contaminate the air you breathe and settle into dust that can get on children's hands.
2. Follow the "Pests and Allergens" tips to keep pests out of your home.
3. Save money by using non-toxic cleaners you can make at home. Follow "Green Cleaning" tips for recipes

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**Warning!** Tobacco Smoke. Smoking cigarettes, a pipe, or cigars in your home or car is harmful because smoke contains thousands of toxic chemicals that remain in the air for days.

**Why?** The smoker is not the only one harmed. Everyone in the family is harmed by secondhand tobacco smoke, which causes asthma, emphysema, heart disease, and cancer, and more frequent hospitalizations for young children.

**Take Action:**

1. Don't let anyone smoke in your home or car.
2. Quit smoking today. Call 311 for help.

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**Warning!** Bisphenol A (BPA). Plastic baby bottles, plastic water bottles, plastic food storage containers, the lining of canned food, and cash register receipts may contain BPA.

**Why?** BPA has been linked to health and growth problems in children, attention deficit hyperactive disorder (ADHD), and obesity.

**Take Action:**

1. Don't heat plastic containers or baby bottles in the microwave.
2. Store food in glass, ceramic, or BPA-free labeled plastic containers.
3. Choose fresh or frozen foods and try cooking with dried beans.
4. Avoid touching cashier receipts when possible.
5. Nurse your baby when possible.

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**Warning!** Pests and Allergens. Rodents, cockroaches, mold, and pets like cats and dogs produce allergens when they shed skin, urine, or feces.

**Why?** Some people who are exposed to allergens everyday become allergic and may develop chronic conditions like asthma.

**Take Action:**

1. Fix holes in your household to help keep pests out.
2. Keep food in sealed containers and take trash out every night.
3. Keep apartment free of dust by damp mopping and using a HEPA-filter vacuum cleaner.