

HEALTHY, WEALTHY & WISE

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In This Issue

Causes and Cures for Household Dust

It Pays to Clean Gutters in the Spring

Doctors Debate Value of Chemotherapy

Don't Retire... Refire!

Recipe: Garlic Shrimp Linguine

Client Testimonials

Moneywise: Put Retirement Before Future College Funding



Causes and Cures for Household Dust

While you are unlikely to run around your house in an apron happily swiping at dust with a quaint feather duster, you probably do have to worry about dust removal. In fact, Americans spend over \$10 billion a year on dust removal products. Add in vacuum cleaners, air filters, furnace filters and so forth and it is easy to see that household dust is big business.

But have you ever wondered what is in household dust? Is it just a nuisance or are there health concerns? When it comes to your home looking good and being clean dust is serious business.

The Dangers of Dust

Household dust contains all sorts of things from the outside atmosphere including dust from volcanic eruptions, forest fires, disintegrating meteors, silica, mica, clay and other minerals from wind erosion. Other constituents of dust come from inside the house including human and animal hairs, paper fiber, dead skin, deteriorating paint particles, ash and soot from fireplaces, candles, stoves and furnaces; sugars, starches, salt, crumbs and other food particles.

Some particles are of concern to humans, especially allergy sufferers: pollen, air pollution, pet dander, mold spores, dead insects, dust mites and their waste. There is growing concern about residues from pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers used both inside and outside our homes. Even roadway dust from automobile tires, brake linings and exhaust becomes household dust, and may contain carcinogens. There's also dust from construction, demolition and deterioration of buildings.

The list goes on and on. In fact, you might just say that almost everything you look at is turning to dust. Needless to say, there is no way to make your home completely dust-free. But preventing the buildup of dust will make your home a healthier place to live. The good news is that dust control doesn't have to be difficult. It's just a matter of changing the way you do a few things.

Following these easy tips will improve your air quality significantly:

- While it is nice to let the fresh air in, keep windows and doors closed when pollen is high or it is windy outside.


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Continued on next page ▶



Garlic Shrimp Linguine

Ingredients:

- 1 pound uncooked linguine
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 3 tablespoons white wine
- 2 teaspoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh parsley
- 1 pinch salt and pepper to taste
- 1 pound medium shrimp, peeled and deveined

Directions:

1. Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add pasta and cook for 8 to 10 minutes or until al dente; drain.
2. In a medium saucepan, melt butter over medium low heat; add wine, cheese, garlic, parsley and salt and pepper to taste. Simmer over low heat for 3 to 5 minutes, stirring frequently.
3. Increase heat to medium high and add shrimp to saucepan; cook for about 3 to 4 minutes or until shrimp begins to turn pink. Do not overcook.
4. Divide pasta into portions and spoon sauce on top; garnish with Parmesan cheese and fresh parsley, if desired.

* If you want to add more greens to this dish, add 5 ounces of baby spinach after you start cooking the shrimp. Then remove the pan from the heat so the spinach wilts and the shrimp don't overcook.

recipe courtesy allrecipes.com

Causes and Cures for Household Dust *(continued from cover)*

- Brush pets outdoors away from the house and use a damp pet wipe to remove remaining dander before allowing them back into the house.
- When cleaning around the house, do your dusting with an electrostatic cloth, duster or damp wipe so you are picking up and removing dust, not just pushing it around.
- When dusting, work from high to low areas and work your way out of the room. Wait about an hour to allow the particles to settle before vacuuming.
- Vacuuming is a great way to remove dust. However, it is important that you use a vacuum cleaner that has an efficient filter system. A vacuum with High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA) filtration improves air quality while you vacuum.
- Don't forget to vacuum your furniture too.
- Install a high efficiency filter on your HVAC system and replace it monthly. For added protection, there are air purifiers designed to be attached to your duct system. Generally, these units require professional installation by a licensed contractor but they can be worth the cost if you have allergy sufferers in the home.
- When dust becomes bonded to carpet and upholstery fibers by sticky or oily residues it's time for professional cleaning. Call Roberts Carpet Care every 6 to 12 months to keep dust from building up deep in your carpet fibers or your favorite chair.

It Pays to Clean Gutters in the Spring

Usually you think about your gutters in fall. But plenty of debris can accumulate there in the six months since you last cleaned them.

It's easy to miss leaves from trees that don't go bare until late fall. They're probably still up there. Storm-blown sticks aren't going anywhere by themselves. Many trees drop spring buds and flowers, and then there are the clouds of white cottony stuff blowing from the cottonwoods. By the middle of April, it's time to clean the gutters again. Here are a few safety tips.

1. You'll be climbing a ladder, so don't wear loose clothes that could trip you up or catch on the ladder or the gutter. Wear shoes that easily grip each rung of the ladder.
2. Wear safety glasses to protect your eyes and wear work gloves so you won't be cut by something sharp, which could also startle you and make you fall.
3. Always work with a partner who can hold the ladder and help move it to the next work spot, and who can call



Don't forget your gutters when doing your spring cleaning.

for help if you fall or are injured.

4. Use a trowel instead of your hands, even if you are wearing gloves.
5. Dump debris into a garbage can below. If you miss it, you can sweep up when you're finished. Never carry a trash bucket up the ladder.

You may not look forward to the project, but gutters are needed to carry water away from the foundation and basement. And they can prevent wall damage on the inside of a home.

Put safety at the top of your list.

Doctors Debate Value of Chemotherapy

The breast cancer trifecta was once indisputable: Surgery, radiation, chemotherapy. This combination has led to great numbers of cancer survivors, but is it all necessary?

According to a 2015 paper published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, a study of more than 10,000 women found very low rates of cancer recurrence in women who had early-stage breast cancer with no lymph node involvement and who were treated with hormonal therapy alone.

This study and others are leading oncologists to ask if, in early-stage treatment, chemotherapy is overprescribed.

Cancer mortality rates have been much improved since the 1980s, with a nearly 40 percent decrease in deaths, and credit for that win goes generally to chemotherapy. But chemo is a dramatic chemical attack



Chemotherapy... is it necessary?

that comes with its own problems. With new advances in genomic testing and tumor biology, some oncologists are asking if it is always necessary.

In fact, use of chemotherapy to treat early breast cancer has been declining. In a study of about 3,000 early-stage tumor patients, use of chemotherapy declined to 21 percent from 34 percent.

But cancer experts warn that withholding chemo is justified in only a fraction of cases. Focusing on the bad side effects of chemotherapy misses the point, some doctors say, stating it has saved the lives of hundreds of thousands of people.

Don't Retire... Refire!

When Ken Blanchard, author of *The One Minute Manager*, happened to meet up with his old friend psychologist Morton Shaevitz, they talked about how people approach getting older.

Blanchard, 75, said he used the term "refire" to describe the attitude of approaching life with gusto. He and Shaevitz, 79, agreed that refire is a way of seeing each day as an opportunity.

Together they wrote *Refire! Don't Retire: Make the Rest of Your Life the Best of Your Life*. It tells about a fictional couple who worked with others to evaluate different aspects of their lives, emotionally, physically and spiritually. Shaevitz says people who are going toward something have the opportunity to live fuller lives. In the book, Blanchard used a fictional couple because, "When you tell a story, people can suspend their inner critic and watch what happens to the characters in a detached way."

Quoted in *USA Today*, Blanchard's best advice is, "Get out of your comfort zone. Take a class at a local college, which will put you into a new setting with different people."

The two of them have formed The Last Minute Gang, an informal group of a dozen friends or couples, people who have agreed that, at the last minute, if someone calls and invites you to do something, unless you're previously committed, you'll say yes.



Let your retirement be a new beginning to the best of your life.

Roberts' Client Testimonials

"I'm very satisfied and have already recommended you to a friend."
– Pam Burger, Williamstown, MA

"Chuck was highly professional!"
– Carole and Daniel Burack, Stockbridge, MA

"Very happy to have chosen Roberts Carpet. Excellent all-around job."
– Jean Russell-Morris, Williamstown, MA

"Did an excellent job on very stained carpets."
– Sue Hamblin, Williamstown Community Preschool



Moneywise

Put Retirement Before Future College Funding

It is more important to securely fund retirement accounts than to save heavily for a child's college education, according to *USA Today*. This might sound selfish to those who think preparing their kids for the future is a more noble goal. But, in fact, it is wise. While children can take out student loans to pay for college, it is unlikely that parents can finance their way through retirement.

College students have many options to pay for their education and having a fully funded savings account might tempt the family to place less importance on free grants and scholarships that will often require more work up front but don't have to be paid back.

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