

Fragrance

If you're watching these in order, you've removed all pesticides as well as harmful cleaning and laundry products from your home. That means you've dramatically improved your home's air quality and are off to a *great* start in creating your healthy home!

Now it's time to do a clean sweep of all products with fragrance! And if you do have a lot of fragranced products in your home, tossing this toxin could be one of the most liberating things you ever do!

For a period of at least 30 days, this also includes removing products with natural fragrance - high quality essential oils that are wildcrafted or organic and processed without solvents. This is because essential oils are highly concentrated and can elicit hormonal and inflammatory responses. And in my thirty years of working with people I have found that absolutely the fastest turnaround in health occurs when people go fragrance free. This is especially important if anyone in the family has symptoms of endocrine or thyroid disruption, chronic illness, or children with health issues.

You might be thinking, "but I love scents and making our home smell like citrus vanilla or my laundry smell like lavender!"

And it's become common practice to use fragrant sprays, candles, and plug-ins - *show quick visuals of these in home setting* to "freshen" up a space, cover up musty odors, or create a warm welcoming environment. It makes sense! Who wouldn't want that?!

Sadly, however, it comes at a high cost.

Unfortunately, there's an incredible amount of greenwashing that makes these products sound healthier and more natural than they are - that leads to so much confusion. We want to empower and equip you so you don't fall for it!

Synthetic fragrance is a gigantic elephant in our homes - there are literally thousands of products that are scented! From fragranced cleaning, laundry, and personal care products to scented candles, air fresheners, plug-ins, toilet paper, trash bags, feminine products and even scented children's toys, stickers, and school supplies! Identifying and understanding the impact that fragrance has on our family leads to motivation to act - the more we know, the more likely we are to make changes.

Why is removing fragranced products so important?

We want to open your eyes to how the single word "fragrance" or "parfum" is actually a chemical concoction composed of hundreds of proprietary and unregulated ingredients. They

are so potent that they impregnate into clothing and their VOCS incorporate into porous materials like drywall and upholstered furniture in your home.

These fragrance chemicals have been found to be asthmagens that trigger asthma, carcinogens that cause cancer, endocrine disruptors that affect our hormones and contribute to infertility and other issues, neurotoxins that impact our brain, mood, and behavior, and obesogens that trigger metabolic disorders like diabetes and make us gain weight regardless of what we eat and how much we exercise. Plus, fragrance chemicals are one of the top five allergens that create sensitization and allergic skin reactions.

These scents are formulated to exist throughout the stages of a product's application cycle. For example, in a fabric softener, you can smell the fragrance in the detergent itself, in the wet laundry after washing, in the exhaust from the dryer, in the dried laundry, and in porous materials the fragrance VOCs come into contact with.

And if that's not enough, studies have found that our skin absorbs an average of 64% of chemicals directly applied to it yet when it comes to synthetic fragrances specifically, the absorption rate was found to be *100%*! Our skin drinks these poisons in and they get directly into our bloodstream. They enter through our nose in addition to our skin and have been found to accumulate in fat cells and are even detected in breast milk.

And what's so challenging, is that when we're around these fragrances for a while, we get desensitized to them. Many of us have grown up with fragrances or are around them all the time, so we can't smell how strong they are. We don't know how they affect us until we remove them!

You'd be *amazed* by the countless stories of people's transformations after removing fragrance from their homes and clothing!

It's time to toss toxic fragrances!

Complete removal is imperative. This is no exaggeration, This is a life changing move. It can be life giving, and life saving in the long run!

Unlike the previous videos, where we simply listed products to gather up, We want to talk about some of the most popular products in the fragrance category.

The first is scented candles.

Scented candles are among the top hazardous products found in a home.

While they have proprietary fragrance recipes that we learned might have hundreds of harmful chemicals released as dangerous VOCs, here's the kicker - it's not just when they're burning! They're problematic *even at room temperature*.

Light them up, and from the wax to the wick, *more* problems are generated.

For example, most scented candles are made of paraffin, a petroleum-based product that emits formaldehyde, acetaldehyde, toluene, benzene, acetone, and more toxic chemicals when burned, especially if the candle is dyed.

They also produce ultra-fine soot with particles so small that they remain suspended in the air for hours. These ultra-fine particles penetrate deeply into the lungs and are absorbed into the bloodstream. They have been directly associated with allergies, respiratory issues such as asthma, bronchitis, and COPD, as well as heart attacks, strokes, and cancer.

Wicks pose an additional issue of concern because even though they may look like cotton, most are cotton wrapped around a metal support. In 2003, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission banned the manufacture of all candles with lead cores, however, they are still out there, in many homes. And it's now been found that the metal core wicks of zinc and tin also release trace amounts of heavy metals, sometimes even lead.

Burning these candles puts a very dangerous toxic load into the air.

But that doesn't mean you can't ever enjoy that warm glow of candlelight! There are *much healthier* alternatives!

Our favorite is pure, unscented, and dye-free beeswax candles with a cotton wick! These candles burn clean with no soot, no emissions of chemicals, and actually *purify and clean the air*. Beeswax candles produce negative ions when burned, which make dust and other particulates drop from the air. In contrast to a scented candle, which remember, leaves the very dangerous ultra-fine particulates suspended for hours.

Another option is flickering candles that glimmer like natural candles but are powered by batteries. You can find them in many different shapes and sizes. I recently attended a wedding and all candles were of this type and it was beautiful!

And if you want colored candles for aesthetic reasons, we recommend unscented colored candles that you don't burn but leave out for decoration and centerpieces.

Let's Toss these Candles!

Take a box and gather all scented candles around your home. Remember to include candles scented with essential oils. Don't forget to look where you store holiday decorations - maybe even your attic! Scented candles are so powerful that unless your storage area is detached from your home, the fragrance will get out and spread through your home year round.

Look in drawers, cabinets, closets, under sinks, and in your attached garage.

If you've stored scented candles in a removable drawer, a pro tip for getting cleaner indoor air faster is to remove the drawers and place them in the sun for a few hours a day until the drawer

no longer smells and the fragrance chemicals are gone. When you're ready, we have information in our resource section with instructions on how to remove fragrance residues from other materials in your home. Do as much as you're able at a time and know it will pay off! For now, removing all the sources is key.

One client of mine thought she had tossed all the toxins. She even tried some of our recommendations for removing fragrance from porous materials like drywall and upholstery. There had been many improvements in the health of her family, but her daughter with asthma was still having issues. I told her it can take time and persistence to fully eliminate fragrance from the home. When I went to her house, I found many candles scented with essential oils in jars with screw-on caps that she thought weren't a problem. Those candles with tops are just like products sitting in cabinets that emit VOCs in small amounts even when closed. Think of the grocery store aisles with cleaning products that are closed and sealed but you can still smell them. That subtle difference after full removal did the trick! Her daughter stopped having to use her inhaler once all candles and fragrance had been removed. I'll say it again - we just don't realize how much these chemicals impact us, even in very small amounts, until they are removed!!

Now let's talk about air fresheners.

We're bombarded by air fresheners in many places - public restrooms, workplaces, taxis and ride shares, schools, stores, hotels, friend's homes, fitness centers - where we really need fresh air - and even doctor's offices and hospitals. There are many types - sprays, gels, oils, hanging disks, potpourri, stick diffusers, air wicks, misting systems, wall plug-ins, and more.

Unfortunately, it's estimated that 75% of US households use air fresheners and many also put air fresheners in their cars. In addition, it's becoming more and more popular in stores and hotels to have a signature proprietary fragrance distributed throughout the building by an automatic misting system. It's never been more important that we make our homes our safe haven where we can get a break from these exposures, which only make us more vulnerable to contagious illness.

I want you to really grasp that if you have scented air fresheners in your house they are a primary source of hundreds of harmful VOCs and some even create secondary reactions if there is ozone in the air. Secondary reaction byproducts include formaldehyde, acetaldehyde, glycol ethers, free radicals, and ultrafine particles, like soot from candles, which are so dangerous to the lungs!

In addition to the health issues linked to fragrance blends alone, there are other chemicals used to make air fresheners that have been shown to be very toxic to pets, cause migraine headaches, earaches, metabolic syndrome, depression, breathing difficulties, loss of coordination, nausea, cancer, irregular heartbeat, diarrhea in babies, as well as liver, kidney, and central nervous system damage.

The toxic complexity of the formulas in air fresheners often trigger immediate headaches, migraines, and respiratory difficulty in many people. They know there is a direct cause and effect because the onset of symptoms is extreme. This should be a red flag for all of us - even if you don't have any noticeable direct symptoms. These products are harmful to our health no matter what greenwashing you might read on labels. "Fresh Clean Smell" *doesn't* mean healthy!

Let's zero in on plug-ins. Chemicals are emitted 24/7.

They have been found to interfere with the production of the male hormone testosterone and have been associated with reproductive abnormalities.

They can cause allergic reactions and asthma.

They release formaldehyde, which is a known human carcinogen linked to cancers of the nose and throat, and causes irritation of the throat and airways, potentially leading to dangerous infections, frequent nosebleeds, asthma, and other respiratory ailments.

Plug-ins pose increased risk for the elderly, infants, pregnant women, and people with compromised immune systems. A 2013 study of more than 2,000 pregnant women, reported in the International Journal of Public Health, found that women who had plug-ins during gestation were statistically far more likely to have babies that suffered from serious lung issues. Fragrance truly is the new secondhand smoke!

Fragrance from plug-ins deeply incorporates into porous materials like drywall and upholstered furniture. In fact, until Marilee developed a protocol for outgassing materials, she would tell her clients to walk away from any home they were considering buying if the previous homeowner used plug-ins. Now she lets people know it can be removed, but gives a heads up that depending on how heavy the use, it can take time and persistence. Special outgassing techniques for a home are included in our resources.

It's time to toss toxic air fresheners!

Take a box and gather all air fresheners from your home. Also include those that contain essential oils. After removal, turn on the ceiling and exhaust fans to move air and draw out the VOCs. Open your windows, when weather and humidity permit, to help indoor air move out of your home and let fresh air in.

Remember to look in your car for air fresheners as well. Also, a good tip if you have your car professionally cleaned, is to ask them to use only the fragrance-free soap you provide and to please skip using any air fresheners. You'll be helping them out as well!

Finally, we want to address miscellaneous scented products commonly found in homes today.

The products that impact babies and children directly should absolutely be screened carefully. Scented diapers, soaps, bubble baths, stickers, school supplies, toys, children's books and more pervade the air in our homes and schools.

Sadly, children are now born into a world of scented products that are marketed especially for them. This is significant and tragic because babies, toddlers, and young children don't detoxify chemical compounds as efficiently as adults and this results in increased concentrations of toxins in their bodies.

Sensitization to allergens can start in infancy. Fragrances are one of the most frequent allergens causing allergic skin reactions in children.

And especially because babies put everything in their mouths - it's so important to avoid scented toys. Fragrance chemicals are strong endocrine disruptors and early exposure has been documented to impact hormone balance.

We strongly recommend choosing fragrance-free baby and children's products. Do a thorough scan and gather up all items like this around your home.

And just like little ones, our pets are super vulnerable too. Products like cat litter, pet deodorizers, poop bags etc. significantly impact the air quality not only for us but our pets as well. Look in our resources for safer, healthier pet products.

Next, scented trash bags.

Scented trash bags have become stealth invaders of our space. In the past you would just grab a box of trash bags and you were good to go. Why would you need to read a label? But now, many are not only scented but also contain antimicrobial chemicals. These trash bags contaminate the entire room and ultimately the whole house. If anything is being stored in the trash bags, it becomes contaminated with the fragrance.

One of Marilee's clients that tossed the toxins, detoxed her clothes of fragrance and got plastic trash bags to store them in. When Marilee walked in she was surprised to smell fragrance since this client had tossed all toxic fragrance, laundry, cleaning and personal care products. Well, turns out her trash bags were scented and added fragrance back in her house and clothes. The bags were also treated with antimicrobials, making the clothes she'd been wearing even more toxic. Always look at the box and make sure you're getting unscented, untreated trash bags!

Scented toilet paper and feminine products are also important!

These may seem minor, but the thin, sensitive skin that these products come into contact with is the most vulnerable to the uptake of chemicals of any kind. Especially fragrance since they're so easily absorbed! Remember - fragrance chemicals impact our hormones, can cause unwanted weight gain and metabolic syndrome like diabetes, neurological issues like depression, anxiety, brain fog, and even cause some cancers.

When someone has hormonal issues, like cramps, PCOS, PMS, endometriosis, etc. - we always ask them what toilet paper and feminine hygiene products they use. Sometimes when people toss the toxins there is a last straw that really makes a difference. Numerous women with endocrine disruption weren't free of their painful menstrual cramps until they changed out their toilet paper and hygiene products. Check to make sure the toilet paper and feminine products you use are fragrance-free! And you'll learn when we discuss plastics that these products should be BPA free as well.

Lastly, fragranced hair, skin, soap and perfume products.

We'll talk more about these in our video on personal care items, but like laundry products, if your personal care products contain synthetic fragrances, you are inhaling harmful VOCs 24/7. Remember, our skin absorbs 100% of fragrance chemicals. Look through all your personal care products and if you see the word fragrance or parfum, toss it in your box. Once you have gathered scented candles, air fresheners, trash bags, stationery, toilet paper, fragranced personal care products, etc., take the box out of the house.

There is no need to keep them since all synthetic fragranced products are harmful. Properly dispose of all of them.

If you just can't bear throwing away your scented candles or perfumes at this time - put them in an airtight Sterilite container and store them in an outside area or detached garage. It is important to note that since fragrance chemicals incorporate into porous materials like drywall, fabrics, and carpet, it will take time for them to clear from your home. Our resource section has tips for accelerating the process.

And take note - If some of the products are fragranced with wildcrafted or organic essential oils you can try carefully reintroducing them after a month or so.

We want you to experience how a truly healthy home smells. It doesn't! Removing materials and products with fragrance will transform the lives of everyone in your home!

We're so excited for you!