

## How can I protect my Lungs?

- STOP** Read warning labels and follow them!
- STOP** Wear gloves to keep your skin safe from burns. Sometimes skin contact with a chemical can cause allergies.
- STOP** Leave windows and doors open, or use a fan to keep the air fresh.
- STOP** Keep cleaners in the containers they came in.
- STOP** Read the MSDS (Material Safety Data Sheets) for the chemicals you work with.
- STOP** Watch out for small rooms, confined spaces and poor ventilation/air flow!

### Watch Out for These

**Warning Signs!**  
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If you have **ANY** of these problems, talk to your doctor. These breathing problems are not normal!

- **WHEEZING**
- **CHEST TIGHTNESS**
- **COUGH**
- **SHORTNESS OF BREATH**

## What Can My Doctor Do . . .

### To Check My Lungs?

- Breathing Tests at the Doctor's office
- Peak Flow Meter you use to test your own breathing

### How Can I . . .

#### Get More Information?

- Call your doctor.
- Read the MSDS.
- Go to [www.getasthmahelp.com](http://www.getasthmahelp.com)

### Keep This Number Handy . . .

#### In Case Of An Emergency

Poison  
Control



**1.800.222.1222**

#### IT'S ALWAYS BETTER TO BE SAFE

if you have any doubt about a chemical you are working with or were exposed to, even if you weren't the person doing the cleaning, contact your doctor.

**It's better to protect your lungs now, than having to live with breathing problems for the rest of your life.**



**Asthma & Cleaning Agents**  
what you need to know!



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## Can Cleaners Cause Asthma? YES, they can!

You might not expect it, but chemicals we use to clean at work can cause asthma. This is what happened to some people in their jobs:

**A Cashier** had trouble breathing about 2 hours after she cleaned up a spill of drain cleaner at the supermarket where she worked. She had to stay at the hospital for 3 days to get her breathing under control. The Doctors told her she got asthma from that spill. **One year later she still had asthma.**

### A Housekeeper

at a hotel noticed she had trouble breathing when she used window cleaner, bathroom cleaner or bleach. Her Doctor told her she had asthma from her job. Sometimes her breathing was so bad she had to go to the emergency room and once she had to stay at the hospital. **Three years later she still had asthma.**

**A Hospital Worker** got asthma about two years before she started her new job as an anesthesia aide. Four months after starting her new job her breathing got a lot worse, especially when she was around floor wax, sterilizing chemicals, bleach deodorizers and air fresheners. Her main job was cleaning the tools used by the anesthesiologists in a small room with poor air flow. She had to go to the emergency room more than 20 times the year she had that job. Her doctor told her to quit her job and a year later she did. **She still had asthma after she quit, but her breathing trouble was not as bad.**

## How to avoid getting sick from using cleaners:

DO NOT MIX different products together. Watch out for left-over cleaner in buckets, on rags and on sponges.



DO NOT USE a cleaner at *full strength* when the instructions say to DILUTE with water. **It's important to always read the label.**

Sometimes, a person can get an allergy to a cleaner just by using it regularly.

**NEVER MIX CLEANERS**  
Mixing Bleach and Ammonia  
or  
Mixing Bleach and Acid  
**MAKES POISONOUS FUMES**



## Who Can Be Affected?

All sorts of workers use cleaners, like *janitors, office workers, and hospital workers*. We need cleaners to disinfect surfaces and control mold and dust. But some people who work with those same cleaners, or work in areas where cleaners are used can get breathing problems from them.

**Here are some jobs where you might be exposed to cleaners:**

### TYPE OF CLEANER

### TYPE OF JOB

**Carpet Cleaner,  
Floor Wax,  
Stripper**

Janitor, Teacher,  
Office Worker,  
Health Care  
Worker, Maid

**Disinfectant**

Nurse, Restaurant  
Worker

**Toilet Cleaner,  
Glass Cleaner**

Housekeeper,  
Hotel Maintenance,  
Janitor