

Sinthetic Cleaning chemicals in the home cause disease

Love to keep a tidy home? The chemicals in common cleaning sprays could be detrimental to your respiratory system, according to a new report.

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Researchers from universities in Norway recently conducted a study, published in the [American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine](#), to determine how cleaners may contribute to lung decline over time.

"While the short-term effects of cleaning chemicals on asthma are becoming increasingly well documented, we lack knowledge of the long-term impact," senior author Cecile Svanes said in a [statement](#). "We feared that such chemicals, by steadily causing a little damage to the airways day after day, year after year, might accelerate the rate of lung function decline that occurs with age."

For their assessment, they examined the lungs of more than 6,200 women and men from 22 health institutions, following them over a course of 20 years. During that time span, the participants were asked if they cleaned their homes and if they were professional cleaners. If so, they were also required to record how much they used typical liquid cleaning products.

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After analyzing the results, they found that women who cleaned as little as once a week had an accelerated lung decline risk. In fact, they said using cleaning products for 20 years is equivalent to smoking 20 cigarettes a day for 10 to 20 years for women. Men who cleaned did not see the same decline as women who cleaned.

The scientists said they were initially shocked by the results. "However, when you think of inhaling small particles from cleaning agents that are meant for cleaning the floor and not your lungs, maybe it is not so surprising after all," they wrote.

They believe the cleaning chemicals irritate the mucous membranes that line the airways, which causes damage. To lower the risk, the [British Lung Foundation](#) suggests looking for products that are labeled "allergy friendly" as they have fewer chemicals.

While the researchers acknowledge their study included very few people who did not clean, they said their findings are strong.

"The take home message of this study is that in the long run cleaning chemicals very likely cause rather substantial damage to your lungs," they wrote. "These chemicals are usually unnecessary; microfiber cloths and water are more than enough for most purposes."