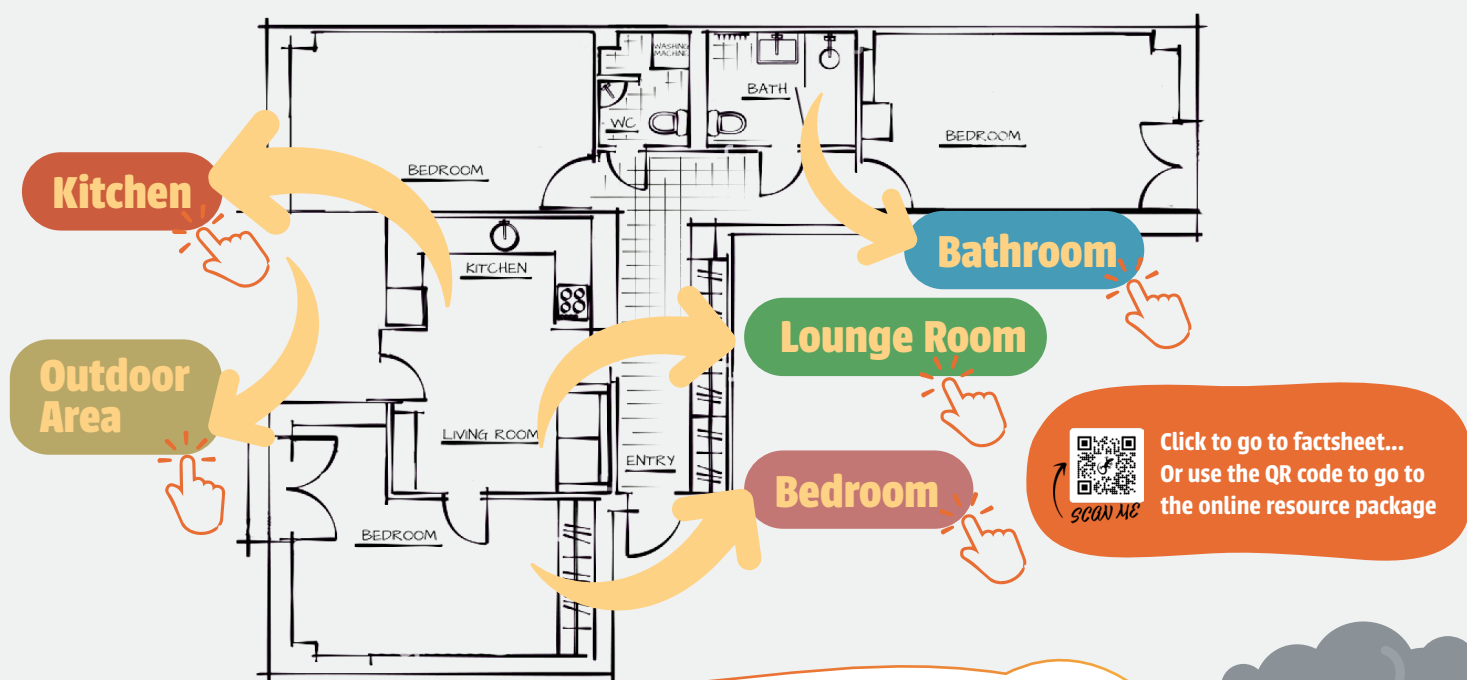


# My Healthy Home

## Home Health Factsheet Series

There are things you can do in your home to help prevent you getting sick, or to stop the spread of germs and sickness to others living with you.



**Keeping your home healthy helps to prevent you getting sick. Health issues that can be caused by things in your home include:**

- coughs and sore throats
- colds and flu
- gastro, diarrhoea and other tummy bugs
- scabies, skin sores and other skin infections
- ear infections like otitis media
- eye infections like conjunctivitis and trachoma.

Some infections can make you very sick and can lead to diseases that affect:

- **your heart**, like rheumatic heart disease, which is caused by a germ called strep A [Find out more: [Cardiovascular Health Portal](#)]
- **your lungs**, like pneumonia or tuberculosis [Find out more: [Respiratory Health Portal](#)]
- **your kidneys**, when bacteria gets into your body and causes a kidney infection [Find out more: [Kidney Health Portal](#)]

VISIT YOUR DOCTOR OR ABORIGINAL MEDICAL SERVICE IF YOU ARE SICK

Developed in consultation with  
Nirrumbuk Environmental  
Health and Services



Australian Indigenous  
HealthInfoNet



SCAN ME



# Make your own cleaning products



## For general cleaning:

Mix equal amounts of water and white vinegar in a bucket or spray bottle.

Use with a cloth to clean furniture, doors and door handles and any other hard surfaces to remove germs and dust.



## For bathrooms, toilets and other surfaces that need more scrubbing:

Make a paste with 500g bicarb soda and 3 tablespoons dish washing liquid - scrub onto surfaces.

Spray with white vinegar from a spray bottle so that the paste bubbles up, then wipe away with a wet cloth.



## For cleaning seals on fridge doors:

Mix a tablespoon of bicarb soda with one litre of warm water and use with a cloth or brush to gently clean your fridge door seals. Rub a thin layer of vaseline on the seals to keep them soft and working for longer.



Australian Indigenous  
HealthInfoNet



*Developed in consultation with  
Nirrumbuk Environmental  
Health and Services*

## Things you can do in your lounge room to keep everyone healthy!



**Make a plan for who will sleep in the lounge room when you have extra visitors** Less people sleeping in one room can prevent the spread of germs that can cause health problems such as breathing issues and skin infections.



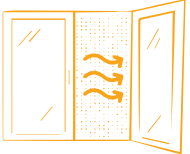
**Lift mattresses in sleeping areas if they don't have a bed frame** Lean them against a wall to air out the mattresses and prevent germs and bacteria from building inside them.



**Wash any bedsheets, pillowcases and blankets regularly** Washing prevents the mites that cause scabies and the bacteria that can affect your ears and eyes (like conjunctivitis or trachoma). Wash bedding more regularly if sharing a mattress with animals.



**Keep floors clean** Remove rubbish every day and throw it in the bin outside to keep pests away and make sure germs can't grow on floors or furniture. Sweep or vacuum the floor to clean away dust, dirt or pet fur which can cause breathing problems and skin irritations.



**Open or close windows to control room temperature to feel better and save power** Open at night to cool the room without the air con. Closed on hot days when using the air con.



**Fix holes in flyscreens** Keep out flies and mosquitoes so they can't bring diseases inside and make you sick.



**Go 'smoke free' inside** Keep the air clean and prevent issues with your lungs and breathing like asthma. Don't smoke around kids as their lungs are still developing.

Your lounge room is a common space and sometimes people may have to sleep in here.

It's important to keep your lounge room clean and tidy to prevent the spread of infections and sickness.

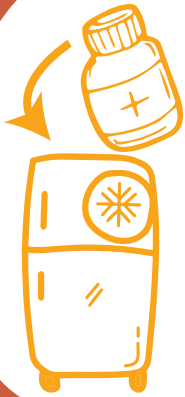


SCAN ME





Here are some things you can do in the kitchen to keep everyone healthy!



### Store fresh food and any medications in the fridge and check that the seals on your fridge are working

Good seals will keep your fridge cold and prevent food from going off and making you sick. Keeping medicines cold is also important as they may not work properly if they get too warm.



### Store dry foods in containers with airtight lids

Food that's left out, can attract pests like cockroaches, ants, and rats bringing germs and disease inside. Check that food is still within the 'use-by' date before eating.



### Wash dishes, utensils and chopping boards with dishwashing liquid and hot water after each use

After drying your clean dishes, put the kitchen tea towels in the laundry basket for washing so they don't grow bacteria.



### Wash your hands with soap and water before and after cooking and eating food

Stop bacteria getting into your food and giving you gastro or diarrhoea.



### Wipe down all tap handles, bench tops and surfaces regularly

Do this before and after preparing food to prevent germs and bacteria from spreading. Keeping benchtops dry can stop germs from growing, which can cause breathing problems or contaminate your food making you sick.



**Throw food scraps in a rubbish bin with a lid** Prevent insects and other pests from coming inside the house. Empty the kitchen bin into the outdoor bin every night and put that bin out for rubbish collection every week.

In your kitchen you cook food for yourself and others, so it's important to keep your kitchen clean to prevent the spread of germs.

Your kitchen is a 'wet area' in your home, so making sure the 'health hardware' such as the plumbing, taps and refrigerator are all working is important for good health.



SCAN ME

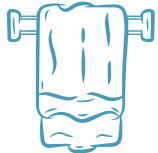




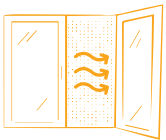
## Things you can do in the bathroom and laundry to keep everyone healthy!

### In the Bathroom:

- **brush teeth** every morning and night
- **wash your face** with soap and water every day
- **have a shower** at the end of every day
- **bathe children** at the end of every day.



**Don't share towels - use your own towel and hang it where it will dry after use** Sharing towels with others can spread infections that can cause issues with your eyes (like trachoma) or skin (like scabies).



**Open windows daily** and use the exhaust fan to remove moisture and prevent mould which can lead to breathing problems.



**Wipe down all tap handles, counter tops and surfaces regularly to remove germs** Wipe up or mop any excess water on the counter or on the floor so bacteria can't grow.



**Clean your toilet regularly** Use a toilet brush and cleaner inside the bowl and wipe down the seat and lid with a cloth and cleaning liquid. This removes germs that can cause gastro and diarrhoea.



**Only use toilet paper** Using things like newspaper can block your toilet and cause it to overflow, leaving germs on the floor. Don't flush nappies as they will block your toilet.

### In the Laundry:



#### Regularly wash:

- **kitchen tea towels** - daily
- **bathroom towels** - at least once a week
- **all bedding** - at least once a week. Do this more often when the weather is warm or humid as you will sweat more and leave bacteria on your sheets
- **pet's bedding**
- **clothing.**

Your bathrooms and laundry are known as 'wet areas' – they have water, which helps you keep your whole house clean!

Making sure the 'health hardware' such as the plumbing, taps, toilets, and washing machines are all working is important for good health.

It's also important to keep wet areas clean to prevent the spread of germs and mould.



SCAN ME





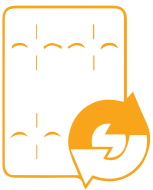
Here are some things you can do in the bedroom to keep everyone healthy!



**Decide where everyone will sleep when you have extra visitors** It's important to limit the number of people sleeping in each bedroom to prevent the spread of infections that can affect your lungs and heart, such as rheumatic fever caused by a germ called Strep A.



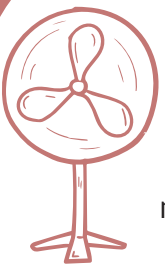
**Wash all bedsheets, pillowcases and blankets at least once a week** Washing prevents the mites that cause scabies and the bacteria that can affect your ears and eyes (like conjunctivitis or trachoma). Washing also helps to reduce Strep A infections.



**Lift mattresses in sleeping areas if they don't have a bed frame** Lean them against the wall to air out the mattresses and prevent germs and bacteria from building up inside them.



**Wash your pet's bedding** It's best if your pet sleeps on their own bedding or outside the bedroom. If you share your bed with animals, wash your bedsheets more often so germs and bacteria can't grow on the sheets.



**Close windows, curtains or blinds on hot days to keep the room cool for sleeping** Open the window at night to keep your bedrooms cooler for longer without needing the air con. Using fans when sleeping will also use less power than the air con.



**Try not to eat in bedrooms or other sleeping areas** If you do, remove all crumbs and rubbish to keep away pests that can bring diseases.

Bedrooms are where you get your rest for good health and wellbeing.

When you have extra visitors, make a plan for who will sleep in the bedrooms and who will sleep in other areas around the house like the lounge room or outdoors in warmer weather.

Opening windows will also improve ventilation so everyone can sleep well!



SCAN ME





Here are some things you can do in the outdoor area of your home to keep everyone healthy!



### Lift any mattresses on decks or verandas during the day

Lean them against the wall to create more space and air out the mattresses to prevent germs and bacteria from building up inside them.



### Keep pets up to date with vaccines and worming tablets

Prevent your animals from passing on any germs or diseases to you. Desex dogs and cats so that you don't end up with too many pets to look after.



### Put all rubbish in the outdoor bin and put this on the street for rubbish collection every week

Keeping your yard rubbish-free will prevent pests like flies, cockroaches and rats from bringing germs and disease.



### Wash your hands and face with water regularly if you live in an area with dry, dusty conditions.

Dust can irritate your eyes, mouth and lungs.



### Keep hazardous chemicals or cleaning products in clearly marked containers

Lock them in a cupboard or box so children can't get to any poisons.



### Tip out any dirty water in old tyres or containers and mow grass regularly

Stop mosquitoes from breeding in water puddles and long grass, so they can't bring diseases.



### Wash any bed sheets including pet bedding regularly

Bedsheets and pet beds can get dirtier outside so wash these often to prevent dust and soil from making you sick.

Outdoor areas can be used as an extended living and sleeping space when you have extra visitors.

It's important to keep outdoor areas clean and free from clutter to prevent injury and any diseases that can be caused by rubbish, dust, chemicals and pests.



SCAN ME



# Your Environmental Health Practitioner can help you keep your home healthy

## Let them know if anything in your home needs repairing, including:

- leaking ceiling or damage to the roof or walls
- patches of mould on walls or ceilings that can't be cleaned easily
- broken or missing windows or doors
- holes or tears in the flywire on windows
- issues with water quality
- leaking or broken pipes and taps
- blocked sinks, drains or toilets that won't flush
- broken or missing towel rails, toilet roll holders or bathroom mirrors
- exposed electrical wires, broken power points or lights that aren't working
- equipment that isn't working, such as:
  - air con units, fans or heaters
  - washing machines
  - ovens or hotplates
  - fridges, including any damaged seals on fridge doors
  - lawn mowers
- issues with decks or verandas like broken poles or floorboards
- damage to any fences around your yard
- pest issues

**Also, let them know if you need anything to help you with extra visitors, such as mattresses, bedding, towels and soap.**

**See a doctor if you have any issues with your breathing, eyes, ears or skin, or feel sick in any way.**

## My Environmental Health Service is:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Useful Contacts: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Housing Provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Doctor or Aboriginal Medical Service: \_\_\_\_\_

Developed in consultation with  
Nirrumbuk Environmental  
Health and Services



Australian Indigenous  
HealthInfoNet



SCAN ME