



Wellness Connection

Clean Your Home Naturally!



Do new cleaners on the market advertised as better for you and the environment peak your interest? Can they help you stay on top of grease and grime? Here are answers to common questions on cleaning chemicals and their alternatives.

Q. HOW ARE NATURAL CLEANERS BETTER?

A. Products that contain harsh chemicals like bleach and ammonia can irritate skin, nasal passages, and lungs, and can be dangerous if mixed with other products or used improperly. Cleaning your home with nontoxic or natural alternatives such as vinegar, baking soda, and even salt can cost less and be just as effective. For example, instead of using a corrosive commercial oven cleaner, pour salt on fresh oven spills and scrape residue off after the oven cools. Use a pumice stick, available at hardware stores, on tough oven stains.



Q. HOW DO I CHOOSE MORE NATURAL OR LESS HAZARDOUS CLEANERS?

A. Look on the label for signal words—poison, danger, warning, or caution—that indicate how hazardous the product is. Buy cleaners with no signal words or choose those marked with the less serious signal words “warning” or “caution.” Always follow label instructions for safe use, storage, and disposal.

Q. WHAT SHOULD I LOOK FOR ON A CLEANING PRODUCT LABEL?

A. Compare ingredient lists. Choose water-based cleaners rather than those with petroleum solvents. You also can use baking soda or borax to clean your toilets.

Q. WHAT IF THE PRODUCT LABEL DOESN'T LIST INGREDIENTS?

A. Manufacturers are now required to state if a product is hazardous. You can check the federal website householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov to learn about the ingredients, potential health effects, and safety of different household products. ■

INSIDE

- 2 Recipe: Grilled Honey-Herb Chicken
- 3 Make Your End-of-Life Wishes Known to Loved Ones
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Get **Fired Up** for Safe Grilling!

Grilling is a favorite American pastime. Playing it safe when you fire up your grill is just as important as the food you choose for a successful barbecue. Here are tips to keep grilling season safe and fun.

GENERAL TIPS

- Place the grill at least 10 feet from your house, garage, or anything else that can burn, such as dry shrubs.
- Don't leave a lit grill unattended.
- Keep children and pets away from the grill.
- Have a fire extinguisher on hand.

CHARCOAL GRILL

- Use only charcoal starter fluids to light the grill. Never use gasoline.
- Don't add starter fluid to coals that already have been lit.

GAS GRILL

- Keep the lid open when lighting. If the grill doesn't light after the first few tries, wait five minutes to allow the gas to disperse.
- Turn off the gas valve when grill is not in use. ■



Sweet, Succulent Honey-Herb Chicken

chicken breasts 4 skinless, boneless halves (about 1 lb.)

lime Juice from one (about 2 tbsp.)

fresh coriander 1 to 2 tbsp., chopped

honey 1 tbsp.

1. With a mallet, pound each piece of chicken to about ½-inch thick.
2. Combine lime juice, coriander, and honey in a small bowl. Brush chicken breasts with this glaze.
3. Brush grill lightly with olive oil. Grill (or broil) chicken for about five minutes on each side. Serve immediately for a hot meal or refrigerate for use in sandwiches or salads later.

Serves four; each serving provides:

Calories **149**; Fat **1.5 g**;

Cholesterol **69 mg**; Carbohydrate **5 g**;

Sodium **79 mg**; Protein **27 g**



Looking for healthy recipes, or tips for losing weight? Find our Diet and Nutrition Zone by visiting www.bluehealthadvantage.com and clicking "My Health Zone."



Make Your End-of-Life Wishes Known

It's never too early to set up an advance directive. This document explains the kind of medical care you want—or don't want—at the end of your life. Family members and doctors will turn to your advance directive when you can no longer make your own decisions. If you don't have an advance directive, they use their best judgment.

EXAMPLES OF ADVANCE DIRECTIVES

One type of advance directive is a living will. It provides detailed instructions about your preferences if you cannot speak for yourself and require medical care to stay alive. By specifying the treatments you do and don't want, this document can ensure that your wishes are honored.

Another form of advance directive is a health care power of attorney. It is also sometimes called a health care proxy. In this document, you name a trusted relative or friend as a "substitute decision maker." This person will make treatment decisions for you when you cannot. A medical power of attorney may simply say who your

substitute decision maker is. But it also can include your detailed preferences for end-of-life care.

IF YOU'RE READY TO BEGIN

Start by talking with your doctor. You also may want to get advice from an attorney, contact your state bar association, or research advance directives on the Internet. Your document does not have to be written by a lawyer, but it should comply with the law. It also must be signed in front of witnesses.

Give a copy of your advance directive to your doctor. Also supply copies to your attorney, friends, and family members. And if you've chosen someone as your substitute decision maker, make sure that person has a copy. You can change your advance directive at any time. ■

If you have questions about end-of-life care, call the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization's Helpline at [800-658-8898](tel:800-658-8898).

A Primer on Insurance Terms

Here is the final installment in our series on health care lingo. You have probably seen the following words or acronyms. We want to make sure you understand what they mean.

Health savings account (HSA). An HSA is a tax-advantaged medical savings account available to taxpayers in the U.S. who are enrolled in a high-deductible health plan. HSAs allow you to save for qualified medical expenses on a tax-advantaged basis.

Preferred provider organization (PPO). A PPO is a type of health coverage that is based on a network of doctors and hospitals who offer care to covered people.

look for info about discount programs in our next issue!

Our Spring 2009 publication provided valuable information about ticks and the prevention of Lyme disease.



Once you have removed the tick, we ask you NOT to throw it in the garbage, as previously recommended. Instead, save the tick in a container. Dead or alive, this pest will provide helpful information to your physician if you develop signs of infection. See your doctor if you develop a fever, headache, fatigue, or a red, ring-like rash after a tick bite.

Celia Juel,
Corporate Communications

Brian Pickering, APR, Vice President, Corporate
Communications and Brand Management

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Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska
7261 Mercy Road, P.O. Box 3248
Omaha, NE 68180-0001

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HEALTH BRIEFS

Shake Salt from Your Kids' Diet

If you're worried about your child's weight, start shopping for low-salt foods and snacks. Salty foods make people thirsty. Kids and teens tend to reach for sugar-sweetened soft drinks when they get thirsty, says a recent study. Cutting salt intake by half could mean 2.3 fewer soft drinks per week. And that could help children avoid obesity.

Save the ER for Emergencies

A crowded emergency room (ER) means patients must wait longer to see doctors and get pain relief. Ambulances may be diverted to a hospital further away, postponing treatment for true emergencies such as heart attacks.

A government survey found that at least one in eight ER visits was for a non-urgent reason. What signs should prompt a call to 911 or an ER visit?

- Trouble breathing
- Pressure or pain in the chest or upper abdomen
- Fainting, sudden dizziness, or weakness
- Changes in vision or mental status
- Sudden, severe pain or unusual abdominal pain
- Uncontrolled bleeding
- Severe or persistent vomiting or diarrhea



- Coughing or throwing up blood
- Feeling suicidal
- Trouble speaking

If your situation isn't a medical emergency, avoid going to the ER. Call your doctor or visit an after-hours clinic instead.

Go Bananas to Lower Blood Pressure

A healthy diet can help lower blood pressure. But do certain minerals provide more protection than others? A review of research looked at the effects of potassium, calcium, and magnesium. It found that potassium was most likely to lower blood pressure. Good sources of potassium include bananas, prunes, and acorn squash.