

## YOUR HOME ISN'T AS HEALTHY AS YOU THINK – HERE'S HOW TO FIX IT

Celebrity interior designer Nikki Hunt, founder of Design Intervention, challenges common beliefs about home wellness, revealing the hidden health risks lurking in our homes and small yet powerful changes homeowners can make to transform their spaces into true sanctuaries for well-being.

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Most of us like to think our homes are safe havens, insulated from the stresses and pollutants of the outside world. But what if your home is actually undermining your health? Yes, you read that right. Hidden toxins, poor lighting, stale air, and even common household materials can all have a bigger impact on our well-being than we realise. With just a few simple changes, you can turn your home into a sanctuary that genuinely supports your health.

### UNPOPULAR OPINION 1: YOUR HOME'S AIR QUALITY IS WORSE THAN OUTDOORS

Many people assume that pollution is a strictly outdoor issue, but indoor air can be two to five times more polluted. VOCs (volatile organic compounds) are released by everything from paint and furniture to cleaning products, and they can linger in your home's air for years.

**THE FIX** Open windows daily to refresh the air, and add air-purifying plants. Consider an air purifier if your budget allows. For new furniture, let it off-gas outside if possible, or ventilate by keeping windows open to help these chemicals disperse. Maintain a humidity level of 40-60% to keep allergens like mould at bay.

### UNPOPULAR OPINION 2: ARTIFICIAL LIGHTING IS MESSING UP YOUR CIRCADIAN RHYTHM

Many people design with aesthetics in mind, ignoring the impact of lighting on their health. Indoor lighting is often way too dim in the day and far too bright at night, throwing off our circadian rhythms. Typical indoor lighting is 100 times dimmer than daylight, yet it's about 100 times brighter than moonlight. This can mess with sleep, hormones, and even immune health. Natural light isn't just nice to have; it's essential for our body's rhythm.

**THE FIX** During the day, let natural light pour in by keeping blinds open and using whiter, brighter bulbs. Come evening, switch to warm, dim lighting to signal to your body that it's time to wind down. This

small change alone can make a big difference to your sleep quality and overall well-being.

### UNPOPULAR OPINION 3: CONVENTIONAL CLEANING PRODUCTS AREN'T AS CLEAN AS YOU THINK

Most people think cleaning makes their home healthier, but many conventional cleaning products contain chemicals like phthalates and synthetic fragrances. These "clean" products leave behind invisible toxins in the air and on surfaces, which can build up in our systems and trigger allergies and other health issues.

**THE FIX** Switch to plant-based, eco-friendly cleaners and fragrance-free laundry detergents. Look for "biodegradable" and "non-toxic" labels to ensure you're not swapping dust for chemicals.

### UNPOPULAR OPINION 4: PLASTICS ARE MORE DANGEROUS THAN YOU THINK

Here's a shocker: many homeowners think they're doing their part by ditching plastic water bottles, but plastic is still lurking in our homes—in the kitchen, bedroom, and even the air we breathe. Microplastics from kitchen items and synthetic fabrics don't just break down quietly; they seep into our food, water, and air, adding an unseen level of pollution to our most intimate spaces.

**THE FIX** Use glass storage containers, stainless steel or cast iron cookware, and silicone or wooden utensils. In the bedroom, avoid polyester bedding and blankets—opt for natural fibres like cotton or linen instead.

### SMALL SHIFTS, BIG REWARDS

The reality is that our homes often contain hidden health risks. But the good news is, creating a healthier home doesn't mean an overhaul. Start with these small, simple changes, and you'll soon feel the difference—a home that truly supports your health and well-being.