



# Preventing COVID-19

## Improving Home Ventilation

**Below are ways you can improve ventilation in your home. Use as many ways as you can (open windows, use air filters, and turn on fans) to help clear out virus particles in your home faster. Improved ventilation reduces the amount of Covid-19 particles, other viruses and other pollutants in your home.**

### **BRING AS MUCH FRESH AIR INTO YOUR HOME AS POSSIBLE**

**Bringing fresh, outdoor air into your home helps keep virus particles from building up inside.**

- If it's safe to do so, open doors and windows as much as you can to bring in fresh, outdoor air. While it's better to open them wide, even having a window cracked open slightly can help.
- If you can, open multiple doors and windows to allow more fresh air to move inside.
- Do not open windows and doors if doing so is unsafe for you or others (for example, presence of young children and pets, risk of falling, triggering asthma symptoms, high levels of outdoor pollution).

If opening windows or doors is unsafe, consider other approaches for reducing virus particles in the air, such as using air filtration and bathroom and stove exhaust fans.

### **FILTER THE AIR IN YOUR HOME**

**If your home has a central heating system with a filter and air ducts, do the following:**

- If your furnace fan is controlled by a thermostat, set the fan to the On position instead of Auto. This allows the fan to run continuously, even if heating is not on.
- Use pleated filters as they are more efficient than ordinary furnace filters and can be found in hardware stores.
  - Make sure the filter fits properly in the unit.
  - Change your filter every three months or according to the manufacturer's instructions. See page 2 for instructions.
- Ideally, have the heating system inspected and adjusted by a professional every year to make sure it is operating efficiently.

### **USE FANS**

- Exhaust fans above your stovetop and in your bathroom that vent outdoors can help move air outside. Although some stove exhaust fans don't send the air to the outside, they can still improve air flow and keep virus particles from being concentrated in one place.
- Use fans to improve air flow.
  - Place a portable fan as close as possible to an open window blowing outside. This helps get rid of virus particles in your home by blowing air outside. Even without an open window, fans can improve air flow. Consider using a window exhaust fan if you have one. Be sure it is placed safely and securely in the window.
  - Point fans away from people. Pointing fans toward people can possibly cause contaminated air to flow directly at them.
  - Don't leave fans unattended with young children.
  - Use ceiling fans to help improve air flow in the home whether or not windows are open.

### **CONSIDER A PORTABLE AIR CLEANER**

- If you don't have a central heating system or just want extra filtration, consider using a portable high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) cleaner. They are the most efficient filters on the market for trapping particles that people exhale when breathing, talking, singing, coughing, and sneezing.
- When choosing a HEPA cleaner, select one that is the right size for the room(s). One way to do this is to select a HEPA fan system with a Clean Air Delivery Rate (CADR) that meets or exceeds the square footage of the room in which it will be used. The larger the CADR, the faster it will clean the air.
- The cleaner should be run continuously and positioned:
  - To allow unrestricted air flow;
  - To avoid blowing directly at or between people in the room; and,
  - To ensure the device's air intake is unobstructed by furniture or walls.
- Remember to follow the manufacturers directions on operation and maintenance.



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## How to change your Air Filter

### WHAT HAPPENS WHEN FILTERS AREN'T CHANGED REGULARLY?

Your filters are important in this operation because they help to clean the air before heating it and putting it back in the home as warm air. A dirty air filter can lead to poor indoor air quality and restricted air flow. When dust particles and dirt clog the filters, the system has to work harder to heat your spaces. This can bring on maintenance issues or system failures while aggravating allergies and causing a spike in your energy bills. A clean furnace filter promotes heating efficiency and healthier, purified air. This is why it is important to change your filters regularly.

### WHERE IS THE FILTER LOCATED?

After switching off the power (set the furnace thermostat to the "off" position), you can find the filter inside the unit near the blower motor. It will usually be positioned vertically behind an access panel near the bottom of the furnace. **Remove old filter.**



### CHECK THE SIZE OF YOUR FILTER

Make sure you purchase the right size filter. The size is identified on the outside edges of any filter and they can be purchased at any hardware store, Canadian Tire, or Walmart.

FIND THE FILTER'S DIMENSIONS ON THE SIDE:

16x25x1

### INSERT NEW FILTER

When you replace filters it is also important to make sure the filter is inserted with the ARROW on the filter pointing toward the furnace.

- In a pinch, filters can be vacuumed to be used until new ones can be purchased.
- A true sign that your furnace is starving for air is when the furnaces "cycles on and off" but will not ignite or blow any heat.



### REPEAT EVERY 1 - 3 MONTHS

This is for proper airflow through the filter. Compare it with the air filter being removed.

