



Keep active inside during winter

It's early in the morning; you are sipping on some hot chocolate and looking out your front window. You notice that the snow is falling; people are

bundled up as they head out to work, and the trees are covered with snow and are moving in the wind.

This is a day many people would decide to stay inside. Once you walk away from the window you start thinking about all of the time you have since you are going to be inside your home for the day.

It would be so easy just to cuddle up with your afghan and do nothing but hibernate. Instead, why not make the best of your time and keep active on the inside by organizing your home. Getting organized inside will give you more time to spend outside in the spring.

Organizing your home is the job that everyone talks about doing each year, but does not like to do. By making a to-do list, the hard job of organizing can seem easier to do. Start off by sitting down and jotting down each room in your house. Then, under each room set one or two goals for ways to organize that room.

One idea on how to organize a bedroom closet is to have a fashion show in your room. Try on each piece of clothing and then as you change, make three piles to put the clothes in; one pile is for the clothes you keep, the next can be clothes that you like but need mending, and the last pile can be clothes you plan to donate to a charity. You can always organize the clothes you are keeping in your closet by sections, such as color, season or type of clothing.

Another room that you can tackle is your bathroom. Start by getting new sponges for your shower and/or sink. Also, remember to replace your toothbrush. The American Dental Association recommends that you replace your toothbrush at least every three to four months. One more way to keep your bathroom organized is to look through your medicine cabinet and check the expiration date on each medication (prescription or over the counter). Throw away any expired medicine with flour or kitty litter to make the medicine less appealing before placing it in the trash, or take the expired medicine to a local waste facility for proper disposal. Studies have shown that the bathroom medicine cabinet may not be the best place to store your prescriptions. While you're checking to see if you need your prescriptions refilled, you should move them out of the bathroom and put them in a dresser drawer or kitchen drawer. The heat and humidity when you take a shower or bath can cause your prescriptions to break down and possibly become toxic. So the best place to keep them is in a dry, safe place that is out of the heat and light.

Safety in the home is a big issue that should also be addressed. Walk around your house and make sure that there are working smoke detectors outside each bedroom and/or at least one smoke detector on each floor of your home. Since smoke from cooking and car exhaust can set off a false alarm, the kitchen and garage aren't the best places for smoke detectors.

Once you put in the smoke detectors, you need to make sure that the batteries are working properly. A saying that is easy to remember for changing the batteries in your smoke detectors is, "change your clock, change your batteries." Following that saying can help you to ensure that you change the batteries.

The Pittsburgh Community Services Inc. is an organization that offers free smoke detectors to city and county residents that meet income requirements. This organization also offers a wide variety of other safety items, such as carbon monoxide detectors.

Carbon monoxide is an odorless and tasteless gas that claims hundreds of peoples' lives each year. Carbon monoxide fumes come from several places in your home, such as gas appliances, fireplaces, and wood-burning furnaces. Having a carbon monoxide detector in your home along with smoke alarms can help keep you and your family safe. Another way to use your time wisely while you're indoors during the winter is to start a new hobby such as organizing your pictures into a scrapbook, knitting, doing puzzles and/or board games. Another idea to help keep you organized is to keep a notepad by the fridge, phone, and pantry. Keeping a notepad in these areas can help when you run out of something, so you can write it down to pick it up at the store. Keeping one by the phone can help you remember to call someone back or to schedule an appointment. Keeping a notepad by the bed is helpful if you have any ideas while you are lying in bed or if you forgot to do something that day, you will remember to do it the next day.

Keeping active indoors when it's cold outside can lead you to a "Healthier Tomorrow".

References:

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This column was written by Lisa Magilson, Student Intern at the Center for Healthy Aging (CHA). CHA is a part of the Department of Epidemiology in the Graduate School of Public Health at the University of Pittsburgh. It is one of 33 Prevention Research Centers in the United States funded by the Center for Disease Control.

For questions and more information contact David J. Fetterman, Community Outreach Coordinator & Director of Education at the Center for Healthy Aging at 412-383-3121 or visit [www. healthyaging.pitt.edu](http://www.healthyaging.pitt.edu)

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