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## **Phthalates in Household Cleaning Products Linked to Breast Cancer**

*Maid Brigade honors Breast Cancer Awareness Month with an informative video and tips to create and maintain a safe and healthy home*

**ATLANTA**—Knowledge is power, and in this case, possibly a matter of life and death. As more information comes out linking chemicals in household cleaning products to breast cancer, Maid Brigade honors Breast Cancer Awareness Month with an [informative video](#) and tips to help today's women protect their individual and families' health with safe cleaning practices.

The more women clean the higher their chance for breast cancer, according to two studies recently conducted by the Silent Spring Institute. A study published by the Journal of Environmental Health also found that women who use ordinary cleaning products often were as much as two times more likely to develop breast cancer than women who used a more natural cleaning approach.

"Everyday exposures to toxic chemicals in things like laundry detergent, cleaning supplies, air fresheners, and even a home's indoor air can increase women's chances of developing breast cancer," says Marie Stegner, consumer health advocate for Maid Brigade, the leading green [house cleaning services](#) company.

In Maid Brigade's new video, Stegner discusses with Leslie Reichert – author of *The Joy of Green Cleaning* and a nationally recognized green cleaning expert – why ordinary cleaning products put women at increased health risks.

"Chemicals in cleaning products called phthalates (endocrine disrupters) short out cells so cells can't talk to each other," comments Reichert. "When that happens, they [cells] end up making more or less hormones than they should. That's when cancer cells can be created."

To maintain a safe and healthy home free of life-threatening chemicals, check out the following five tips from Maid Brigade:

1. Find out more information about what you are using in your home and substitute with more natural products like plant-based alternatives or inexpensive homemade solutions. This website <http://householdproducts.nlm.nih.gov> is a great guide.
2. Keep cupboards stocked with these natural cleaning supplies:
  - Plant-based liquid soap like Castile (a safer alternative to petroleum-based soap)
  - Distilled white vinegar (kills germs and brightens whites)
  - Baking soda (a deodorizer, and oil and grease cleaner)
  - Salt (removes garlic and onion scents, and burnt food off pots and pans)

- Essential oils such as lavender, clove, and tea tree oil (combine liquid soap, water, a tablespoon of vinegar and a few drops of essential oil for a great all-purpose spray)
3. Use low (or no) VOC paints, varnishes, and waxes. When painting, open windows and doors and use exhaust fans to remove gases.
  4. Eliminate the use of air fresheners that may contain *d-limonene* (a skin irritant) or *petroleum distillates* (which can irritate the skin, eyes, and respiratory tract). Instead, use baking soda to absorb odors or open windows for fresh air.
  5. Get regular mammograms. Thirty percent of breast cancers can be detected through monthly breast self-exams and 85 percent can be detected with a mammogram. For women over 40, the American Cancer Society recommends screening mammograms every year.

“Really, the thing is just going back to nature and finding out that there are simple things you can use in your home that can make a big difference in your life,” Reichert says.

### **About Maid Brigade**

Maid Brigade cares about the health of today’s families. With more than 25 years of experience, the company is the national leader in green cleaning practices and has a longstanding legacy of offering the latest in maid services and technologies. Maid Brigade is the first and only Green Clean Certified® [housekeeping services](#) franchise that implements a certification program for green house cleaning so customers know that they’re getting a green cleaning that is safe and truly green. For more information on Maid Brigade or for more healthy living cleaning tips visit <http://www.maidbrigade.com> or <http://blog.maidbrigade.com>.

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