

Protecting Your Health at Work: A Brief Guide on Indoor Air Quality for Immunocompromised Individuals & Transplant Recipients

Indoor air quality plays a crucial role in our health, particularly for those who are immunocompromised or transplant recipients. Understanding how to effectively reduce exposure to airborne pathogens is essential. Here are a few key steps you can take to protect your health when working indoors:

Ventilation

Refreshing the air in your workspace is important to reduce pathogen and contaminant exposure.

- **Open Windows:** Whenever weather and outdoor air quality permit, and when possible, open windows to improve air flow.
- **HVAC System Adjustments:** Ask building management about adjusting the HVAC system to increase outdoor air intake and reduce recirculated air. Ask whether the system has high-efficiency [MERV-13 or better filters](#). If not, discuss the possibility of upgrading.
- **CO2 Monitors:** Use CO2 monitors to identify areas of poor ventilation. High CO2 levels ([>1000 ppm](#)) usually mean poor ventilation and higher risk of pathogen spread. CO2 data can be used to ask building management to make changes.

Disinfection

Disinfecting air provides a “hands-off” method to reduce disease transmission risk.

- **Far-UVC Lamps:** [Far-UVC light](#) (200-230 nm) can [effectively inactivate](#) airborne pathogens. Knowing which lamps to buy is difficult because the technology is so new.

Other references: Guidance from the [CDC](#) and the [American Lung Association](#)

Filtration

Filtering air can capture airborne pathogens and particulates to improve overall indoor air quality and lower the risk of disease transmission.

- **Portable Air Cleaners:** Consider buying a portable air cleaner for your workspace. Look for devices with a high [Clean Air Delivery Rate \(CADR\)](#). Typically, the CADR of your air cleaner should be at least [two-thirds of the room’s area](#). Check to see if the air cleaner is [AHAM-certified](#). If cost is an issue, consider [making your own](#) box fan filter.
- **Face Masks:** Wear a high-quality face mask, especially in crowded indoor settings. N95s, KN95s, and KF94s are [best](#).

Advocacy and Communication

Voice your concerns to help create a safer workspace.

- **Discuss with Building Management:** Discuss indoor air quality with your employer or building management. Emphasize your specific needs.
- **Educate Your Colleagues:** Share this guide with your colleagues to help everyone understand the importance of indoor air quality.
- **Advocate for Clean Indoor Air Laws:** Talk with your local officials about introducing legislation based on the [Model Clean Indoor Air Act](#).