

The logo for the Boston Urban Asthma Coalition features a stylized silhouette of a city skyline with several peaks of varying heights. Below the skyline, the text "Boston Urban Asthma Coalition" is written in a bold, sans-serif font.

Boston Urban Asthma Coalition

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Ways to Building and/or Maintaining a Healthy Home

Asthma is a respiratory disease that is provoked by “triggers” in the indoor environment. Common triggers include mold, dust mites, pests, and smoking.



Ways to Reduce Mold

- Insulate all water piping and do not put plumbing in exterior walls. *This will help control moisture.*
- Provide adequate drainage for the basement and install gutters/ downspouts to move water away from the home.
- Windows, doors, and trim should be properly sealed and caulked. *This will help control moisture.*
- Provide storage space in rooms other than the basement. If storing in a basement, use shelves to keep items off the floor. *Storage in damp basements can lead to mold growth.*
- All exterior trim should be primed with a waterproof sealer to prevent moisture from soaking in.

Ways to Reduce Dust

- Do not install carpet—except where it is needed for safety purposes. Instead use a smooth, easy to clean surface such as wood or natural linoleum. *Carpets trap dust and moisture, which can lead to dust mites and mold.*
- Use semi-gloss paint that can withstand cleaning. Install cleanable window shades. *Smooth cleanable surfaces are easier to clean and will reduce the amount of dust in the home.*

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- Allow space for doormats at major entrances and runners in lobbies and hallways. *2/3 of indoor dust is tracked in from the outside.*

Ways to Reduce Other Triggers

- Keep bushes and trees at least 3 feet from the home. *Bushes and trees near a home attract pests such as mice, ants and roaches.*
- Install an electric oven/range instead of gas. If a gas range is installed, be sure to vent it to the outside. *This will reduce potential toxic gases in the home.*
- Provide window air conditioners. *This will decrease the need for open windows and reduce the indoor humidity level.*
- Remove all lead and asbestos. *Both materials are toxic and cause negative health effects. (For more information about lead removal, contact the Lead Action Collaborative.)*
- Do not allow smoking or the use of other tobacco products in the home, especially around young children. *Exposure to second hand smoke can aggravate asthma and cause other health problems.*

