A healthy home is in good repair

A home that is kept in good repair keeps small problems from becoming big problems.

The main idea

Homes that are kept in good repair are less likely to have moisture, pest, and safety problems. By checking your home regularly, and maintaining or repairing it when needed, you can take care of small problems before they become big problems.

How it affects your health

A home in poor repair
- Increases the risk of injuries from accidents
- Is more likely to contain things that can cause asthma attacks, allergy symptoms, and other health problems
- If built before 1978, may contain lead paint, increasing the risk of lead poisoning
  Lead poisoning harms children (damaging their ability to learn, think, and behave) and adults (raising their blood pressure and making them tired or irritable)

How to know if you have a problem

- Moisture or mold, especially in the basement, bathroom, ceiling, or attic
- Leaks, especially from the roof, around windows or doors, and around pipes
- Missing or broken lights or windows
- Missing or broken stair railings or steps
- Worn or damaged electrical wires or cords
- Paint dust or peeling, flaking, or chalking paint, especially in a home built before 1978

How to fix the problem

Check your home often: maintain good conditions and repair problems as necessary
- Clean dryer vents, kitchen fans, and bathroom fans often
- Repair or replace broken windows, doors, railings, stairs, gutters, downspouts, and cracks or holes in foundations
- Fix leaks promptly
- Hire qualified professionals when necessary, such as for plumbing, electrical, and roof repairs
- In homes built before 1978, hire contractors who are certified in lead-safe work practices by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, or learn how to work safely around lead paint

How to learn more

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Healthy Homes Maintenance Checklist, http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/documents/huddoc?id=DOC_12334.pdf
- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, A Healthy Home for Everyone, http://www.cdc.gov/nceh/lead/publications/Final_Companion_Piece.pdf

For more information, call the Connecticut Department of Public Health's Healthy Homes Initiative at 860-509-7299, see www.ct.gov/dph/healthyhomes, or call Infoline at 2-1-1