



San Diego, California Health, Family and Community English and Spanish Info Options

# **SALUD** **HEALTH** info

House plants are more than living energy,  
**Can be**  
**a Cheery Welcome!**



# House plants are more than living energy, Can be a Cheery Welcome!



Everyone knows how nice is a vase of fresh flowers on a table, or a green leafy house plant on a window. Now science proves that along with being pleasing to the eye, they bring real health benefits.

"House plants make people feel calmer and more optimistic", says Bruno Cortis, M.D., a Chicago cardiologist. "Interestingly, studies have shown that hospital patients who face a window with a garden view recovered more quickly than those who had to look at a wall" He said.

Caring for indoor plants gives many a sense of pleasure, tranquility and peace. Several studies showing that the presence of plants also enhance creativity, can help people recover more quickly from stress, help to feel less mental fatigue and may reduce blood pressure.

One study suggests that simply being in a room with some green can reduce physical discomfort. People can improve the mood, as well as the mental power and creativity, with some fresh cut flowers and flowering plants. Good moods are associated with higher levels of dopamine, the hormone that controls the flow of information through the brain. Based on the relaxing qualities of green color, the researchers suggests that our immune system is stimulated by a response to the lush, green plants around us. These chemicals rush block the cell-damaging hormones in our bodies that are generated when exposed to illness and the chronic stresses of life.

As we can see there are many reasons to enjoy indoor plants, flowers and gardens, but perhaps the number one reason plants are good for the home is simple, they improve the quality of the air by increasing the oxygen and the humidity on the air.

The air we breath dictates the quality of life. According to EPA, if the indoor air is often more polluted than outdoor air, it will reflect on your health with conditions such as frequent flu and allergies, asthma, bronchitis, and cancer to name a

few. Since dry air raises the risks of infection and sinusitis, house plants with lots of leaves are ideal as they return moisture to the air. According to one study, one six-inch houseplant per 100 square feet of living area will do a good job of filtering out pollutants. Also, the more vigorous the plant, the more air it can filter. Unfortunately, plants do not do much to alleviate tobacco smoke in the air.



An article published in Rehabilitation Literature by Diane Relf, professor of horticulture at Virginia Polytechnic Institute, told of a major manufacturing company that incorporated plants into the interior design of its office space so that no employee in the office area was placed more than 45 feet from vegetation. Company administrators found that adding plants to the work environment resulted in enhanced creativity and increased productivity by employees.

Some studies go even further than link indoor plants to reductions in stress, fatigue, and illness. The researchers reported that communities with more green areas, are more healthier and productive communities. Communities with designated green space for parks will have more areas for playing, walking and will experience less crime. Communities with plant-filled classrooms and business seem to help for an environment where will be more peace, concentration, encouragement, motivation and joy for study and work.

Hundred years before most of these studies discovered the healing effects of living with green, Claude Monet realized how much his garden had contributed to his art and own healing from a deep, debilitating depression, he set out to paint it for the people of France. Today, his fabulous gardens and paintings gives to many a sense of pleasure, and joy for the world.