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The household chore I would most like to never do again is:

- Vacuuming
- Dusting
- Laundry
- Ironing
- Washing dishes
- Cleaning bathrooms
- Mopping the floors

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The Best Reason Ever Not to Vacuum

If you're looking for the best excuse ever to avoid household chores, we've got it for you: **Vacuuming, dusting, and even making up the bed kicks up so much dust into the air that such chores will actually increase your exposure to particulate pollution, according to a new study from Clarkson University in Potsdam, N.Y.**

What is in household dust? It's a scary roundup: Certain toxic chemicals, such as lead, pesticides, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) are routinely found in the dust in typical homes. And doing just about anything, including walking around your house, is enough to kick up these toxic dust particles.

They are created by the way we live--cooking, smoking, and heating **appliances**. And these particles are wicked. They're lurking in our carpets, rugs, and beds, and we breathe them in. They're implicated in **asthma** and diseases of the heart and lungs.

While the whole point of vacuuming is to gather up the dust, this actually creates a flurry of particles in the air--only some of which ends up in the vacuum cleaner filter. The rest hangs in the air for you to breathe in. "The more vigorous the activity, the more dust you get," lead study author Andrea Ferro, who is a professor of civil and environmental engineering at Clarkson, explained in the news release announcing her research findings.

What can you do to minimize your exposure to particle pollution? First, realize it's basically unavoidable. While this dust will always be hanging in the air, it doesn't mean your home is toxic. But if you are particularly sensitive, do this:

- Rip up the carpet and install wood or vinyl floors. **Carpets** have 10 times the particle-emission rates of wood.
- Make sure your home is well ventilated. Get plenty of fresh air from the outside as often as the weather permits.



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- Open the windows when vacuuming, dusting, frying, or painting.
- Clean the house on a day when you can open the windows.
- Leave your **shoes** at the door. This will stop a lot of harmful chemicals from getting tracked into your home.

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