COVID Normalcy Depends on Improving Indoor Air Quality

By **Marshal Sterio**

Published on December 3, 2021

2022 will mark the third year that the world must deal with the deadly COVID-19 pandemic. With its rising death toll and massive impact on human behavior and the world economy, COVID has changed the way we live, including how we work, play, socialize, shop, and travel. And while much of the world population has done an admirable job adjusting to this new normal, most of us would agree that the old normal was far superior. A world without masks or PPE or social distancing, and without travel restrictions or fights over vaccines, would be preferable to how we're living now. To get there, we have to minimize our chances of spreading COVID-19, and one of the best ways to improve indoor air quality with purified air.

Something (Deadly) in the Air

COVID-19 spreads primarily through airborne droplets, released when a person infected with SARS-CoV-2 sneezes, coughs, spits, or even breathes. The virus can survive in these particles for up to three hours, during which time they can enter another person's system. While scientists are unsure exactly what percentage of COVID cases begin through airborne transmission, most cases do begin with these particles. Masks and social distancing can definitely help keep compliant individuals safe, but droplets can easily end up on one's hands to be spread through hand-on-face contact, and have been proven to travel further than six feet.

These airborne particles are dangerous enough outside, but it's in enclosed spaces that they become a true hazard, circulating until they either land on a surface someone is likely to touch or go right into someone's eye or ear. Mask mandates and social distancing enforcement remain good precautions, but places like stores and movie theaters increase the risk of infection from particles circulating in a small space. Even worse are hospitals,
dental offices, and barber shops, where people must interact in close proximity. Medical facilities are the most dangerous locations of all, as cleaning out or examining a patient's mouth or nose could send far more infected droplets than average out into the air.

The Air Filtration Solution

In any enclosed space, a high-performance air filter is all but required to keep visitors safe from COVID. Proper, surgical-grade filtration will keep the indoor air quality in an enclosed space 99.9% free of all harmful particles. These systems eliminate toxic materials that may carry aerosolized or droplet-borne viruses. In a dental or doctor's office, where large quantities of droplets from the mouth can enter the air, these filters remove any pollutants or contaminants and recycle clean air back into the room. They also eliminate contaminants brought in by visitors from the outside, so a patient who unknowingly carries COVID-laden particles on their jacket will not spread the illness.

Air filtration has a host of benefits beyond eliminating the bio-aerosols that carry SARS-CoV-2. Scrubbing indoor air also decreases visitors' allergy symptoms and promotes healthier lungs. Customers and patients who can breathe easier obviously have a more relaxing and enjoyable time and are more likely to return. But most of all, surgical-grade filters dramatically decrease the risk of transmitting diseases between visitors, making any place with filtered air safer and welcoming during unsafe times. The more businesses that adopt advanced air filtration, the sooner we can nullify the chance of COVID transmission, and get back to normal.

By **Marshal Sterio**

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