

## Better Health Works

January 2014

### Radon: A Silent Killer in Your Home

Radon is an invisible and odorless radioactive gas found throughout the United States. It causes more than 20,000 lung cancer deaths each year—second only to smoking.

Radon enters homes and other buildings through uranium decay in soil or well water. Once it enters a building, it can become trapped, reaching elevated levels.

Radon's radioactive particles may become harmful to those breathing the air. However, the time between radon exposure and the onset of disease may be many years.

One's chances of getting lung cancer from radon depend mostly on:

- How much radon is in one's home, workplace, or school
- The amount of time one spends in buildings with elevated radon levels
- Whether one smokes or has ever smoked

Radon reduction systems can remove the gas from places it gets trapped.

### Testing for Radon

The only way to know if radon is present is to test for it. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends the following steps:

**1. Perform a short-term test.**

Short-term tests can run between 2-90 days. Because radon levels tend to vary from day to day and season to season, a short-term test is less likely than a long-term test to pinpoint a year-round average radon level. If results are needed quickly, however, a short-term test followed by a second short-term test may be used to determine whether harmful radon levels are present.

**2. Consider a long-term test if short-term test results are 4 pCi/L or higher.**

For a better reading of year-round averages, use a long-term test, which can last for more than 90 days. A long-term test is more likely to provide an accurate reading of a structure's year-round average radon level than a short-term test.

**3. Reduce radon if a long-term test or two short-term tests averaged together result in 4 pCi/L or higher.**

Radon reduction systems are very effective—sometimes reducing levels by up to 99 percent—and are not too costly.

Visit the [EPA's website](#) for more information including how to reduce radon.

-Courtesy of EPA.gov

**Join Us in Making Healthy Resolutions!**

Each day in January, Capital BlueCross employees will share their New Year's resolutions on [capitalbluestore.com](http://capitalbluestore.com) . [Visit the blog](#) to see what our health goals are for next year, share your own, get inspired, and offer advice on what has worked for you. You can also find fun and easy tips for getting healthy in 2014, no matter what your resolution is.

### **Healthy Recipe: Beet and Carrot Juice**

If you don't enjoy eating fresh vegetables, juicing may be a fun way to add them to your diet. This juice is rich in fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C and potassium.

#### **Ingredients (serves 2):**

- 1 small red beet, peeled and coarsely chopped
- 1 large carrot, peeled and coarsely chopped
- 1 sweet apple, peeled and coarsely chopped
- 1 pear, peeled and coarsely chopped
- 2 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1-2 tbsp. honey
- 2 c. water

#### **Directions:**

Steam beets and carrots until tender, about 20 minutes. Let cool to room temperature. Combine all ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth.

#### **Nutrition (per serving):**

Calories: 180

Total fat: 0.3 g.

Saturated fat: 0.1 g.

Protein: 1.5 g.

See more at [capitalbluestore.com](http://capitalbluestore.com).

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