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Healthy Homes: The Next Big Real Estate Payday

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When you are watching TV, how many of the ads are prescription drugs? How many of those drugs could be proactively avoided with a healthy living environment? While much of a healthy home is invisible, its impacts are broad and long term, and buyers are recognizing that and willing to pay for it.

Projects across the country are leveraging this trend with in ways that have immediate impacts on the residents and some that have long term benefits.

It even starts early in life, points out Frank Szamboti, the founder of consulting firm Holistic Healthy Homes.

“Kids breath in two times more than we do and are more susceptible to issues that are in the home like the chemicals,” he said. “We should be proactively addressing that, not using prescription drugs, but by addressing it at the roots like by using low VOC paints.”

He also recommends that every bedroom has a dedicated input and output of air exchange because it’s not valuable to pump the room with cold air without removing the hot air as well, which also helps reduce indoor toxins.

“Usually the HVAC is in the basement and the basement is really dirty, but it should be laboratory clean because that’s what is circulating the air throughout your house,” he adds. “We recommend circulating the air in the room and using UV filters to ionize the air.”

He specifies a product that can automatically adjust when there is more particle matter in the air to support sleep and recovery.

These behind the scenes systems are in high demand without being a typical “bling” amenity.

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Hospitality Meets Healthy Homes

The Ritz-Carlton Residences in Fort Lauderdale Beach, Florida, emphasizes the invisibility of the health and wellness impacts without any daily effort from the resident. These low visibility features include low toxicity materials, circadian lighting, water filtration systems, and biophilic elements for stress reduction.

“We approached wellness as something that should feel effortless, not additive,” said Diana Ulis, the CEO and founder of one of the developers, Admire Capital. “From the very beginning, every decision was made with intention, integrating air, water, lighting, and materials directly into the foundation of the building. The goal was to create an environment that naturally supports longevity and daily comfort, without requiring conscious effort.”

This systems approach to wellness is complex with meaningful changes to daily living that compound over time.

“Some elements can be measured directly, such as improvements in air and water quality, while others are experienced more holistically, such as sleep quality, stress reduction, and cognitive performance,” said Amber Berger, founder of the Well Drop and a consultant for the project. “We are increasingly able to connect environmental inputs to measurable health outcomes, but the full impact of integrated wellness design is still best understood as a system rather than isolated metrics.”

That complexity also means that residences are priced at and above $2.5M.

“That said, we don’t view wellness as a premium,” Ulis said. “In high-end residential development, it’s becoming a baseline expectation. Buyers are no longer evaluating just design and location, but how a residence supports how they live, perform and recover.”

Beyond the unit enhancements, the Ritz is offering shared wellness spaces like a relaxation lounge that has neurostimulation and pulsed electromagnetic field recovery.

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The Rising Price Of Healthy Homes

Real estate development firm Ytech is building The Residences at 1428 Brickell in Miami. The 70-story tower is oriented around the natural movement of the sun, with residences and shared spaces designed to support circadian rhythms, optimize daylight, and enhance sleep.

Residents will have to shell out more than $4.4M for these units with plenty of greenery, uninterrupted water views, clean materials, a calm interior environment, and a wellness club that offers infrared saunas, steam rooms, plunge pools, and meditation spaces.

“Products are selected to contribute to comfort, durability, tactility, quiet, and the overall quality of the residential experience,” said Ytech’s founder and CEO, Yamal Yidios. “It also meant using Optigray glass in the exterior envelope, which improves the quality of light and the visual experience within the residence. Those are not decorative decisions. They affect how the home feels to live in over time.”

These visible products matter, but there also are impacts that the residents don’t see or know that they are experiencing, such as better light, more privacy, and quieter homes.

“The psychological dimension is especially important,” he said. “A building with no transient traffic, strong acoustic separation, and wellness spaces gives people a greater sense of calm, control, and restoration. Residents may not always be able to articulate why a home feels calmer, quieter, or easier to live in, but they feel the difference in daily life.”

Some of these design decisions contributed to the high cost, but Yidios doesn’t frame health and well-being as premium add ons.

“We see them as part of what defines a high-quality residence,” he said. “If your objective is to deliver the best product, then a superior health and wellness experience is not optional. It is part of the design brief.”

Water Impacts On Healthy Homes

Another Miami project, the Continuum 12000 Sport and Wellness Residences, is a 20-story waterfront tower is designed to fit into an environment that encourages nearly unconscious, daily interaction with the water.

“We really wanted to focus on place-based wellness and the role of geography in longevity,” said Allie Eicher, the president of Continuum Florida. “We sought out the property actively because of the geographic features. It is east facing, with sunrise orientation, and waterfront on most of the property, so we can activate the water in a meaningful way.”

The design leans on science-backed ideologies that are proven to make residents more creative by being near a body of water. Water valets remove the friction of getting in the water and experiencing the benefits.

Externally, water can have strong positive emotional and psychological health impacts, and internally, healthy water can reduce health impacts from any waterborne pathogens.

Clear.inc has installed its water purification system in health-oriented projects across the country.

“We bring a system that sterilizes the water at the source and disinfects it in the source,” said Gil Blutrish, co-founder and CEO at the company. “There are more than 80 water borne diseases. Many famous buildings have outbreaks of water borne diseases. Creating pure water helps the longevity of the residents, plus it helps the building systems to keep clean pipes.”

For both the health of the building and the residents, consultant Szamboti says that water should be tested because so much of its content is so nuanced at a local level.

“Water is the least recognized health feature,” he said. “From a biological perspective, humans need a high mineral content.”

Hitting the Healthy Home Spectrum

While North Development has luxury projects in Miami that offer sophisticated levels of air and water purification, the developer also has entered a more attainable space with its brand House of Wellness.

Ricardo Dunin, founding partner and director, describes the 656-unit project as a building that cares.

“We believe that wellness focused buildings have been solely affordable by wealthy buyers for too long, so it’s time to make wellness accessible to everyone,” he said. “As you move in, you have your wellness assessed. A wellness director takes care of residents, tracking vitals. Whatever you need will be provided, divided into physical, mental, nutritional.”

If a resident needs to focus most on nutrition, there is a nutritionist that can provide meal plans, plus there are daily classes on health. For those wanting better mental wellness, there are meditation and yoga classes. There also is programming to foster social interactions.

The full-body assessment is followed by ongoing evaluations to track progress over time. This ensures that the offering remains active, measurable, and seamlessly integrated into daily life through intelligent technology and a dedicated wellness app. Residents also have access to on-site nutritional and fitness experts charged with creating tailored programs for holistic well-being.

The building also offers a full-service spa, including a hammam, sauna, steam room, cold plunge, indoor and outdoor fitness facilities, treatment rooms, co-working spaces, social area, juice bar and pantry, podcast room, hair salon, and pet-friendly amenities including a dog spa and dog park.

Designed by MC+G Studio the compact studio, one-, and two-bedroom floor plans start at $390,000.

Healthy Home Certification

As the market for these amenities grows, several programs are trying to bring standards and consistency to solutions.

“LEED certification has been the gold standard in green building for decades, setting the benchmark for how we think about sustainability in the built environment,” said Well Drop’s Berger. “What we’re seeing now is a similar evolution, this time focused on human health. The certification landscape for residential wellness is still evolving and, in many ways, catching up to what residents actually need. More frameworks are emerging, and that’s a positive shift. The industry is finally starting to ask the right questions.”

But, sometimes a certification isn’t needed, especially when solutions are so varied.

“Certifications can be useful frameworks, but they are not the point,” Yidios said. “The point is whether the residence performs at the level it should for the people living in it, in privacy, acoustics, spatial quality, materiality, and the overall lived experience of the home.”

Future Of Healthy Homes Is Getting Healthier

Yidios believes the industry will become more sophisticated about wellness.

“The first phase was very visible, gyms, spas, recovery rooms, and branded programming,” he said. “That will continue, but the next phase will be more integrated. Buyers will increasingly look beyond whether a building has a wellness offering and ask whether the residence itself performs better. Is it quieter? Is it more private? Does it provide better light? Does it feel calmer? Does it give the resident more control over how they live?”

These questions will be driving healthy home design, development and investment questions tomorrow and well into the future when health and wellbeing will be foundational to all housing.