

Allergen Avoidance

Pollen Allergy (Hay Fever)

Pollens are microscopic particles necessary for plant fertilization. Plants that depend on the wind to carry pollen from one plant to another are more likely to be allergic than plants that are pollinated by insects.

1. Avoid the source of pollen during the pollen season (trees in Spring, grass in Summer, weeds in Fall).
2. Avoid outdoor activity in the early morning when pollen is emitted (5am-10am).
3. Keep windows closed in the home and car. Use air-conditioning when needed.
4. Grass-allergic individuals should not mow the grass.
5. Weeds in the vicinity of your home should be cut before they pollinate.
6. Certain fresh fruits or vegetables may cause symptoms in pollen-allergic individuals, especially during that pollen season. Eliminate any fresh foods that have caused symptoms.

Dust Allergy

Dust mites are microscopic insects living in dust. They grow well in carpeting and bedding. They thrive in humid, warm environments.

1. The mattress and all pillows should be encased in an allergy-proof encasing that closes with a zipper. They need not be waterproof or plastic.
2. Bed sheets should be washed in hot water (>130 degrees Fahrenheit) weekly.
3. Synthetic pillows and cotton sheets are preferred to down-filled bedding.
4. The floor should ideally be bare. If rugs are used, they should be washed weekly. If carpeting is present, vacuuming should be done weekly.
5. No dry dusting. Dusting should be done with dampened cloths.
6. Avoid stuffed animals.
7. Indoor humidity should range between 40%-50%.

Pet Allergy

1. Animals to which you are allergic should not be part of your household, whether indoors or outdoors.
2. If a pet is in the home, it must be kept out of the bedroom at all times.
3. If you are in contact with an animal to which you are allergic, wash your hands and change clothes immediately afterwards.

Mold Allergy

Molds are microscopic fungi found both outdoors (in soil, on fallen leaves and vegetation) and indoors (basements, bathrooms, food storage and waste areas, carpets, and upholstery). Mold spores float in the air like pollen. Spore levels may be present at any time of year, affected primarily by weather conditions.

1. Avoid a damp house or basement. A dehumidifier may be necessary.
2. Keep walls as dry as possible. Use the exhaust fan in the bathroom during and after a shower. Watch for growth of mildew or mold.
3. Minimize houseplants, as their soil can be a source of mold growth.
4. Avoid granaries and decaying vegetation. Barns, cut grass, and dry leaves are often reservoirs for mold.