

51 Ways to Reduce Allergies



Approximately 55 percent of all U.S. citizens suffer from allergies. But not all allergens are seasonal. Millions of Americans suffer from year-round allergens, such as dust mites, pet dander and mold, which can cause as much trouble for some patients as weeds do for others. This ebook was put together to give you some ideas on how to fight these allergens.



POLLEN

Pollen is the dust like reproductive part of plants. It can easily be inhaled, and if you are one of 36 million Americans, this will cause allergic reactions. Here are some tips to help:

1. Avoid Early Ventures Outside

Avoid going outside between 5-10am. This is when the pollen count is the highest. If you have a pollen allergy, the safest times to go out are late afternoon and immediately after rain.

2. Check Pollen Count Daily

Pollen counts measure the amount of airborne allergens present in the air. They are reported as grains per cubic meter of air. Universities, medical centers and clinics provide these counts on a volunteer basis.

3. Turn Off Your Swamp Cooler

People with severe pollen allergies may need to tough it out and keep that swamp cooler off during pollen season. Running swamp coolers can irritate allergy symptoms by dragging more pollen into the house.

4. Buy Local Honey

This may help to desensitize you against the pollens in your neighborhood. Many allergy sufferers claim eating local un-pasteurized honey has relieved their symptoms. They recommend you buy some local, un-pasteurized honey and have a little of that every day.

5. Know Your Plants

Many people look at a colorful field of flowers and think it's filled with pollen. But those bright colors are there to attract insects, which carry the heavy pollen from plant to plant. The plants that *aren't* colorful are the ones that spread pollen...and allergies.



DUST MITES

Dust mites are the second biggest allergy cause out there. When dust mites grow, they shed their skin. This is what causes allergic reactions in people. Allergic reactions range from itchy noses and eyes to severe asthma attacks. Here are some ways to combat these little devils:

6. Wash Your Bedding

Your bedding needs to be washed in water at least 130° F to kill dust mites. Do this at least once a week. You can also use special laundry additive that kills dust mites. You can find a list of these special additives at: www.onlineallergyrelief.com/laundry/laundry.html.

7. Keep Indoor Humidity Low

Dust mites can't survive below 50% humidity (thrive at 75%-80%). It's a good idea to keep your home dry. Also, avoid humidifiers in bedrooms. If a sickness requires the use of a humidifier, you can get the same result with a steamy shower. Make sure you thoroughly cleaning the bathroom before and after.

8. Let Your Child Sleep With a Washable Stuffed Animal

If your child has allergies, let him sleep with a washable stuffed animal. This way, the dust mites can be regularly gotten rid of. If your child has a non-washable bed-time pal, you can put it in the freezer for 24 hours to kill dust mites.

9. Replace Old Mattresses

Depending on the age of your mattress, it can contain between 1 and 10 million dust mites. Unfortunately, unless you have a huge freezer, there's no way to get rid of them. The best solution is to toss that old mattress and start fresh with a new one.

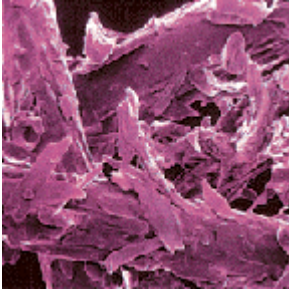
10. Protect Your Bedding

It's a good idea to encase your bedding in an allergy-proof, dust mite proof enclosing. You can find these at www.pacificcoast.com or www.achooallergy.com. Just about everything can be encased, including:

- Pillows
- Box springs
- Mattresses
- Down Comforters

11. Use Dust Mite Powder

Sprinkle dust mite killing powder on carpet and upholstery regularly. You can find some of these powders at www.dustmitex.com or www.alerg.com.



PET DANDER

Pet Dander is the loose skin flakes that animals shed, and is the main cause of pet allergy symptoms. These flakes of old skin can be very sticky, and get on everything. This next set of tips can help alleviate this allergy:

12. Don't Let Fluffy Into Your Bedroom

Keeping your pet out of your bedroom can at least cut your dander allergies down to half. If this isn't possible at least put a plastic cover over your bed during the day. Less pet dander in your bed may help you get a good night's sleep.

13. Bathe Your Pet Frequently

Long pet hair can trap dander, along with other allergy causing particles like pollen and dust. Bathing and gently scrubbing Fluffy frequently can reduce these allergens.

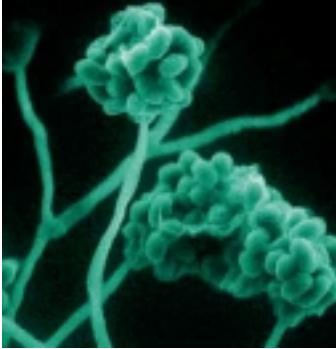
14. Groom Your Pet Frequently

Brushing your pet thoroughly and frequently can help reduce dander. Be sure and get a high quality brush that reaches down to the skin. Also, don't let pet brushes sit around. The hair and dander will wick up right back in the air, and in your nose.

15. Know your Dogs

When shopping for a dog, keep in mind that there are certain dog breeds that have less dander than others. Among these are:

- Poodles
- Terriers
- Schnauzers



MOLD

Indoor molds can be a major contributor to seasonal and Perennial Allergic Rhinitis, as well as other health problems. Mold spores can easily become airborne and can be found almost anywhere. This next set of tips will help keep your house mold down to a minimum.

16. Minimize Indoor Plants

Though indoor plants are pleasing to the eye, they can make your allergies worse. They collect dust and can be a source of mold. If you can't bear to get rid of them, make sure you clean the leaves daily.

17. Thoroughly Clean

Make sure that any area that may collect mold is thoroughly cleaned. These areas include:

- Drain pans
- Shower curtains
- Damp basements
- Air conditioners

18. Avoid Line Drying

Don't hang clothes and bedding out to dry. Pollens and molds can collect on them. Using a dryer ensures that no mold will get on your bedding and clothing.



DUSTING TIPS

We all have dust collect on surfaces in our home. This next section will help keep your home dust-free.

19. Use a Good Broom

There are all sorts of brooms out there. Choosing the right one can greatly effect the dust level in your home. Choose a broom that doesn't circulate dust back into the air. A good one can be found here:

www.allergybegone.com/yelmulbroom.html.

20. Keep Indoor Shelves To a Minimum

50% of all dust in your home is on your shelves. Getting rid of shelves you're not using can cut down on dust in your home. Also keep in mind that knick-knacks on shelves can also collect a significant amount of dust. If you need those knick-knacks, try getting closed door cabinets to display them.

21. Use Electrostatically Charged Dusting Cloths

Dusting with cloths or dusters can release 50% of the dust you're trying to clean back into the air. An electrostatically charged dusting cloth traps dust and doesn't let it back into the air. You can find a good one that claims to trap 90% of dust at:

www.achooallergy.com/clean-dustwizardcloth.asp.

22. Wear A Mask

Wearing a good HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Arrestant) mask while you dust can really help with your dust allergies. Most of these block 95% of dust from getting into your lungs. You can find a few at:

www.alerg.com/page/A/CTGY/11MSK.

23. Don't Forget Hard-to-Reach Places

When dusting, remember to dust everything, including:

- Window treatments
- Windowsills
- Window frames
- Ceiling fans
- Light fixtures
- Storage units



VITAMINS, MINERALS, AND HERBS

There are a lot of supplements out there that have been known to help with allergies. These next set of tips will help educate those looking for herbal remedies for allergies.

24. B Complex

B vitamins are great for maintaining your nervous system. It can also act as an anti-oxidant and get rid of stuff stuck in your system that may be causing your allergies.

25. Vitamin C

Vitamin C is great for beefing up your immune system. It's just about the safest vitamin out there. A stronger immune system helps ward off allergies more efficiently.

26. Calcium

Not widely seen as an allergy fighter, calcium is usually seen as a source of strengthening bones. Certain studies however, suggest that calcium can have an antihistaminic action. This means less sneezing for you.

27. Anti-oxidant Combination

Strengthen your allergy resistance with a good quality anti-oxidant combination, including the minerals zinc and selenium, and vitamins A, C, E, and beta-carotene. This combination has been known to have very good results in allergy sufferers.



OVERALL TIPS

The rest of this book will focus on overall tips to fight those allergies. Hopefully you'll find something that will help your specific allergy.

28. Get Rid of Cockroaches

These nasty critters not only spread disease, but it's estimated that about 10 million people in the US are allergic to cockroach waste products. Cockroach sprays or traps aren't that expensive, and it will give you peace of mind to get them out of your home.

29. Avoid Ionizing Air Cleaners and Ozone Generators

Don't believe everything you hear. According to the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency), ionizing air cleaners and ozone generators are not only ineffective air cleaners, but they and can be very dangerous. You can read more about the EPA's concerns on their website (www.epa.gov).

30. Use Allergy medications Carefully

There are tons of over-the-counter medicines out there. Make sure you read the directions and use them carefully. Especially be careful with those that cause drowsiness. Be smart about driving and other things when you take them.

31. Wear a Face Mask

Facemasks can really help people with bad allergies. Wear a mask while doing allergy-irritating projects, like:

- Mowing the lawn
- Cleaning a dusty attic
- Vacuuming
- Cleaning the bathroom
- Changing the bedding
- Grooming your pet

32. Avoid Alcohol

Alcohol can worsen nasal allergies. It stimulates mucus production, aggravating nasal congestion and runny nose. So think twice about drinking. And remember to never mix alcohol with allergy medication.

33. Use Filters

Placing filters over heating and cooling vents can help alleviate allergies. Vent filters can trap airborne particles like dirt, lint, dust mites and hair. Filters aren't very expensive and can be found at any hardware store.

34. Choose New Carpet Carefully

If you're in the market for new carpet, it's important to remember that from an allergy sufferer's view, not all carpet is the same. New carpet can be a source of chemical emissions and irritants. Ask your carpet guy what chemicals were used on your carpet and give it time to air out. Serious allergy sufferers may want to consider hardwood floors.

35. Thoroughly Clean Down

Down comforters, pillows or feather beds can be hard to clean, but are also good at trapping dust and dirt. It may mean a trip to the dry cleaners, but the results are well worth it. You can also look for hypoallergenic down. This is specially made for allergy sufferers and will greatly reduce allergens.

36. Shower Before Bed

Showering and washing your hair before going to bed can greatly reduce your night-time allergies. During the day, you can get dust mites, pollen and even mold on your skin and hair. Showering at night will keep these things out of your bed.

37. Clean Your Floors

It's important to clean all floors in your home twice a week. This ensures that allergens are being disposed of. A good way to do this is to vacuum the area, then go over the floor with a wet rag or clean mop.

38. Avoid Smoke

This may sound like a no-brainer, but many people don't realize how smoking tobacco can actually make their allergies worse. Smoking weakens your immune system, making it easier to be effected by allergens. Also keep in mind that the air around people who smoke actually makes a great place for mold to grow.

39. Disinfect

A few times every month, clean all of your bathroom and kitchen surfaces with an industrial grade disinfectant (not just a spray disinfectant like Lysol). This will make sure that *all* of the allergy-causing germs are out of your home. This is also the best way to kill mold.

40. Clean Your Carpets

Make it a habit to have your carpets professionally cleaned each fall, *after* you close your windows for the winter. Do your homework, and ask your carpet cleaners if their service will get rid of mold, pet dander and dust mites.

41. Keep Your Windows Closed

A good rule for a serious allergy sufferer is to keep your windows in your house and car closed all year. Use the air conditioner instead. This makes sure that allergens outside won't blow into your car or home through your windows.

42. Drink Plenty of Water

A good tip for an allergy sufferer is to drink at least one gallon of water per day. This may seem like a lot, but it can actually help quite a bit. Along with flushing toxins out of your body, water also hydrates you. When your body is sufficiently hydrated, allergens don't stick as much and collect in your throat and lungs.

43. Exercise

Exercising daily will boost your immune system. Research shows that moderate exercise such as jogging, cycling and speed walking can boost the body's defenses against viruses, bacteria and allergies. Don't overdo it, though. Exercising too much can actually weaken your immune system.

44. Talk To Your Doctor

It's important to talk to your health care professional about your allergies. Whether it's your family doctor or an allergist, good communication is important to receive the best treatment for your allergies. Web MD (www.webmd.com) suggests asking these questions:

- What substances are causing my allergies?
- What allergy symptoms should I be concerned about? When is it necessary to call the doctor?
- What allergy medications or other treatments are available? What are the benefits/side effects of each treatment?
- Will I need allergy shots?
- What guidelines should I follow if I'm prescribed allergy medication?
- Should I take medicine all the time or only when my allergy symptoms become worse?
- Should I stop exercising outside if I have allergies?
- What types of plants are better to put in my yard if I have allergies?
- How can I avoid or reduce exposure to certain allergens?
- What can I do around my house to reduce allergens?
- Should I avoid going outside during certain times of the year? What can I do to decrease allergy symptoms when I do have to go outside?
- How can I tell the difference between allergies and a cold or the flu?
- Will changing my diet improve my symptoms?
- How often should I come in for follow-up appointments?

45. Use a Good Vacuum

Using a good vacuum is important. Your vacuum should have strong suction, adjustable brushes and high-efficiency filtration. When buying a vacuum, look for CRI's (Carpet and Rug Institute) "green labels." (High Standard Vacuum)

46. Take Care of Your Vacuum.

The CRI recommends vacuuming floor coverings once a week; Pet areas; twice a week. Vacuuming furniture is just as important. This can put a lot of wear and tear on your vacuum. Make sure to change the disposable bag in your vacuum regularly (or clean the collector cup). Also check and watch out for worn belts.

47. Keep Bugs Out

Avoid attracting insects into the kitchen. These insects can make allergies worse. Here are a few things you can do:

- Get rid of all excess grease
- Keep food off of counters
- Seal cracks around cabinets
- Store food in tightly closed containers.

48. Use HEPA Filters

As mentioned before, HEPA stands for (High Efficiency Particulate Arrestors). A HEPA filter traps particles as tiny as .3 microns. To give you an idea what this means, Pollen ranges between 5-100 microns. Human hair -- between 70-100 microns. Having a HEPA filter in your home will greatly reduce allergens.

49. Wash Your Hands

Yet another no-brainer, it's important to wash your hands and skin regularly. This will keep any pet dander, pollen or mold off your hands. This is extra important if you rub your eyes or mouth.

50. Use Dehumidifiers

If you live in a humid environment, you might want to invest in some dehumidifiers for your home. They're not very expensive, and can really help reduce dust mites and mold. If you already have a dehumidifier, here are some tips to remember for maintaining it:

- Change the filter once a year so it will run at optimum performance.
- Clean the water container often to avoid mineral build up in the pan.
- Inspect the cooling coils for frost or ice build-up, as this can destroy the machine.
- Don't turn your dehumidifier off and then on again right away. Wait at least ten minutes to let the pressure in the system equalize.
- Don't set the humidistat higher than necessary or it will run constantly.

51. Do your own Research

There are constantly new ideas and tips for fighting allergies. Remember to do your own research. Use the Internet, newsletters, library, etc. You may find things that give you relief from your allergies that aren't mentioned here.