

WANTED

FOR TRIGGERING ASTHMA

Name: Dust mite

Favorite hangouts: bedding, carpets, anywhere dust accumulates

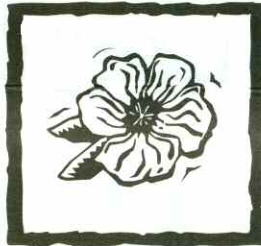


What to do:

- Wash bedding in very hot (over 130 degree) water every two weeks.
- Eliminate carpet or treat with special anti-dust solution.
- Seal mattress and pillows in zippered anti-dust covers.

Name: Pollen

Favorite hangouts: trees, grass, weeds

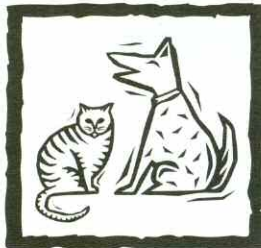


What to do:

- Use air conditioning as much as possible.
- Keep windows shut during peak season.

Name: Animal dander (actually the protein from the animal's skin and saliva)

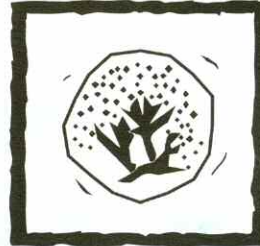
Favorite hangout: everywhere in a house with pets; dander becomes airborne



What to do: If you can't remove the pet, at least keep the bedroom animal free and the door shut to the rest of the house.

Name: Mold spores (AKA mildew)

Favorite hangouts: inside — dark, moist places such as bathrooms and basements; outside — compost piles, fallen leaves



What to do:

- Use a dehumidifier, maintain humidity below 50 percent.
- Use exhaust fans in bathroom and kitchen.
- Allow adequate ventilation in home.
- Wash walls with equal parts household bleach and water.
- Keep a light on in closets or basements.

Name: Smoke

Favorite hangouts: cigarettes, wood stoves



What to do:

- Avoid smokers or ask them to smoke outdoors.
- QUIT SMOKING.
- Make sure your flue is okay and the fireplace or stove is properly vented.

Also guilty in some cases of asthma:

Viruses
Foods
Infections

ASTHMA 101

The simplest definition of asthma is chronic inflammation of the airways in the lungs. It's important to realize that the lungs of a person with asthma always have some degree of inflammation.

The good news is you don't have to be controlled by your asthma. Asthma is not curable, but it can be managed.

- Take the medications your doctor has prescribed. Even if you feel fine, take them! Some medications keep the airways from becoming inflamed — they prevent asthma attacks. Once an asthma attack has started, these medications will not stop the attack.
- Avoid or minimize exposure to your asthma "triggers."
- Use a peak flow meter, a hand-held device that helps you monitor your breathing problems. It warns of early asthma problems, even if you don't yet have symptoms. You can then alter your medications according to your doctor's instructions to prevent an asthma attack.

REWARD-BETTER BREATHING

CULTIVATE DREAMS — NOT DUST AND MOLD — IN THE BEDROOM

Making your whole house free of asthma triggers can be overwhelming. But one room that should get the “white-glove treatment” is your bedroom. You generally spend around eight hours a day with your head buried in your pillow. Make sure you can breathe easy during those eight hours!



Some general tips to remember:

- Keep the room humidity at 40 percent-50 percent to discourage dust mites and mold.
- Follow Felix Unger’s example and get rid of clutter. Knick-knacks, books, papers and clothing can all trap dust.
- Dust and vacuum the room weekly. Dust with a damp cloth. If you have asthma, wear a face mask while dusting or, better yet, let someone else do it!

Now to the specifics:

1. Replace dust-catching curtains with window shades you can wipe down.
2. If animal dander is a trigger, keep the pet out of the house or at least out of your bedroom.
3. Use a H.E.P.A. (high efficiency particulate air) cleaner. (Inexpensive table top models are not effective.)
4. Instead of many stuffed animals, opt for one or two special ones that can be machine washed.
5. Remember to wash bedding every two weeks in hot water (over 130 degrees). Only hot water kills dust mites.
6. Encase mattress and pillows in zippered, dust-proof covers.*

7. Remove all carpeting. If that’s not possible, spray carpet and upholstery every 2-3 months with a 3 percent tannic acid solution or benzylbenzoate.*
8. Keep a light burning in the closet to discourage mold growth. Keep all clothing in the closet with the door shut.
9. Get rid of upholstered furniture and use wooden or plastic furniture that can be wiped down.

**For more information about asthma and allergies, including where to purchase dust- or mold-control products contact:*

Allergy and Asthma Network/Mothers of Asthmatics: pamphlets, newsletters, resources for families 1 (800) 878-4403

American Academy of Allergy and Immunology, a professional organization for allergists, offers free information packets and a 24-hour referral line for board-certified physicians 1 (800) 822-2762

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America: books, pamphlets and videotapes, free information packet 1 (800) 727-8462

American Lung Association: free brochures on childhood, teen and adult asthma 1 (800) LUNG USA (586-4872)