



## What can I do to avoid my allergens?

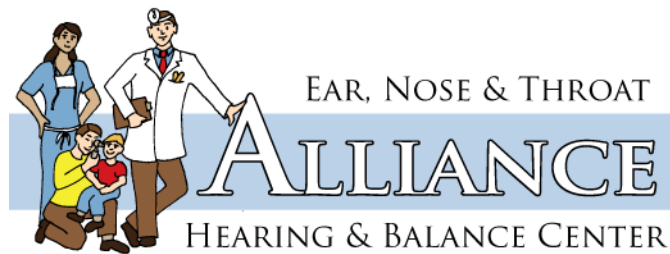
### INDOOR Allergens

#### General

- Dust and **vacuum** (best by non-allergic household member) –best with HEPA filter. Focus on carpets, mattresses and fabric furniture.
- Use an **air treatment system**, such as an electrostatic air purifier or HEPA filter air cleaner, particularly in bedroom.
- Keep **garbage containers** clean and empty them frequently. Keep containers in the garage or outside.

#### Indoor Mold

- Use **fungicide sprays** in damp areas of house.
- Use **fungicide solution** to wash window ledges, sinks and showers once every 3 months. *Lysol* or *Clorox* kill spores.
- Use antifungal cleaner to prevent mildew on **shower curtain and walls**.
- Use **mold-inhibiting paints**, especially in damp, dark areas (basement)
- Reduce the levels of dampness in attic, basement or crawl space with good drainage (**clean drains**) or cover ground with **black polyethylene sheeting**
- **Clean all house filters**, such as the furnace, air conditioner, dehumidifier and air treatment systems.
- **Fix water leaks.**
- Keep home **humidity levels below 40%**. Buy an inexpensive **humidity gauge**, or hygrometer (available for \$15: [testproducts.com](http://testproducts.com)). A dehumidifier may be needed.
- Add a small amount (a few drops to a teaspoon) of white vinegar to water in a **humidifier**. The acidity will suppress mold growth. Clean more thoroughly weekly or monthly.
- Avoid **wallpaper** (conducive to mold). If wallpaper is used, add boric acid to wallpaper paste to slow mold growth.
- Dry **wet clothes**, towels or rags.
- **Don't line-dry** clothes; use a dryer.
- Keep **house plants** to a minimum and cover soil with aluminum foil. Mold inhibiting solutions are available for use with potting soil.
- Avoid **aquariums** and **terrariums**.
- Take soft toys and stuffed animals out of the bedroom.
- Check **dryer vent** for proper operation and outdoor venting.
- Empty **refrigerator water pans** frequently. Remove **old food** (suggest dating).
- Periodically wash refrigerator **shelves** with antifungal solution.



### Dust Mites

Concentrate on the bedroom where you spend the longest period of time every day. The strategy is clean or remove all household items that collect dust.

- Encase **mattress** and **box springs** in dust-proof covers. Avoid plastic covers. Or vacuum the mattress weekly.
- Use polyester or Dacron **pillows**. Replace pillows once a year. Avoid down-filled (feather) pillows and comforters. Or throw them in dryer, set on air fluff cycle, for 10-15 minutes monthly.
- Wash **sheets** and **blankets** in hot water at least once a week
- Avoid foam rubber pillows and mattresses that are likely to become moldy.
- Avoid **heavy curtains** and Venetian blinds. Use light washable curtains – clean monthly.
- Minimize **carpets**, especially wall-to-wall carpeting.
- Avoid **upholstered furniture**. Substitute wooden or plastic furniture.
- Avoid wall pennants, macramé hangings and other dust collectors.
- Remove stuffed animals, magazines, books or boxes collecting dust from the bedroom.
- Keep closet doors shut.
- Cover air vents with **filters**. Remember heating and central air conditioning systems need clean filters or they will circulating dust around the house.

### Animal Dander

- Keep pets **outdoors** or out of the **bedroom**.
- **Bathe** pets weekly.

### Cockroaches

- Use boric acid traps or hydromethylnon

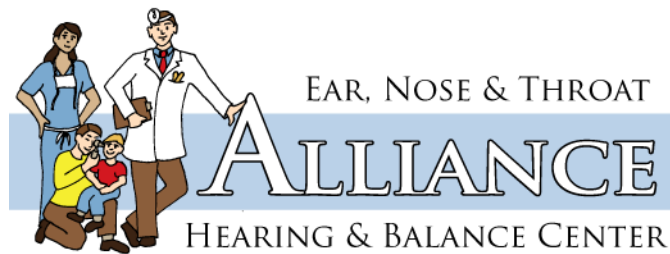
### OUTDOORS: Pollen allergens

- **Stay indoors** when mold levels are high. Best if house has central air conditioning. Molds are usually associated with dampness and high humidity. Pollen levels are usually highest between 5-10 am. Mold level information is available through the internet.

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/weekly/usmap.htm>

[www.pollen.com](http://www.pollen.com) (general allergy information, regional pollen count, allergy alerts, information about the 1200 plants)

- Keep **windows** and **doors** closed.
- Use an **electrostatic air purifier** or **HEPA filter air cleaner**, particularly in bedrooms.
- Avoid **fans** to draw in outside air.
- Keep **windows closed when driving**. Use the car air conditioner to re-circulate air inside the car.
- Avoid **piles of leaves, shaded gardens and stagnant water**.



- Do not plant **trees and shrubs near the house**. Keep existing foliage trimmed.
- **Eliminate weeds** by cutting them down.
- Keep **lawn short**. Mowing should be performed by a non-allergic family member or lawn service.
- Wear **sunglasses** outside.
- Use a **mask**.
- **Shower, wash hair and change clothes** after being outside.
- Avoid **unpaved parking areas** and **construction sites**.
- Plan vacations to dry locations when mold levels are high in your area.
- Learn more about the interaction between the interaction between pollen allergies and food (mouse to next page level)

Source of allergy products:

[www.allergystore.com](http://www.allergystore.com)

National Allergy call 1-800-522-1448 or visit [www.nationalallergy.com](http://www.nationalallergy.com)