

## **Allergy And Asthma Triggers**

The following is a generic list of potential triggers and recommendations. You need to determine which are applicable to your symptoms.

### **Tobacco Smoke**

Avoid tobacco smoke as much as possible. As harmful as it is for an adult, it is even more toxic to a child's lungs.

There should ideally be no smoking in the home (even in a different room) and definitely no smoking in an enclosed environment such as a car (even with the windows open).

### **Dust Mites**

Encase your mattress and box spring in a plastic cover. Close the zipper and cover it with duct tape.

Encase your pillow in a plastic cover or hypoallergenic cover.

Weekly: wipe down the plastic covers with a disinfectant such as Lysol and let them air dry

Wash all bedding, including material based pillow covers and stuffed animals your child plays/sleeps with in hot soapy water. The water temperature must be at least 130 degrees.

Normally your hot water heater should be set no higher than 110 degrees to minimize the risk of accidental burns. Therefore, you need to **temporarily** turn up your water heater or go to the Laundromat.

Try not to sleep or lay on cloth covered cushions.

Ideally utilize hardwood floors as much as possible, especially in the bedroom. These need to be damp moped daily.

If carpet is used, it should be vacuumed daily utilizing a HEPA filter.

Dust the room weekly using a damp rag without sprays such as Endust.

### **Dry Air**

Keep the house humidity at least 20 percent.

### **Animal Dander/Saliva**

Minimize exposure to furred or feathered pets, especially in your home.

If a furred or feathered pet is kept in the home: keep it out of the bedroom

: keep the bedroom door closed

: cover the air vents in the bed room with an air filter pad

: minimize the use of carpets and cloth covered furniture

### **Cockroach**

Keep all food out of your bedroom.

Keep food and garbage in closed containers – never leave food out.

Use appropriate poison baits, powders, gels, or paste. Consultation with a licensed professional is strongly recommended.

### **Indoor Mold**

Keep the home humidity less than 45 percent.

Fix leaky plumbing.

Clean moldy surfaces with a product containing bleach.

### **Pollen And Outdoor Mold**

During periods of high pollen and mold spore counts, stay indoors as much as possible keeping the windows closed and utilizing the air conditioner as necessary.

Washing the face and hands when coming inside as well as taking a shower at night might minimize the symptoms from pollen and spores.

Using sun glasses might minimize eye symptoms.

### **Smoke, Strong Odors, And Sprays**

Avoid the use of a wood burning stove, kerosene heater, or fireplace.

Minimize exposure to strong odors and sprays, including perfume, talcum powder, hair sprays, and paint.

### **Exercise, Sports, Work, Or Play**

Notify us if you are unable to be active in sports or go about your daily routine without significant symptoms.

Warm up for about 10 minutes prior to exercise.

Minimize outdoor activities when there are high pollen or mold spore counts, high humidity, or significantly high or low temperatures if these are triggers for your symptoms.

### **Illness**

Minimize exposure to ill individuals.

Frequently wash your hands with soap and water.

Get a flu shot.

### **Miscellaneous**

Sulfites in foods: avoid shrimp, dried fruit, processed potatoes, beer and sulfite containing wines if the trigger your asthma symptoms.

Cover your mouth and nose with a scarf on cold or windy days if these are triggers for your asthma symptoms.

Medications including aspirin are potential triggers.

The use of artificial Christmas trees rather than real ones is recommended.

Home duct/vent cleaning has not as of yet been shown to decrease the potential for allergies/asthma nor affect those symptoms which are already present.

### **Resources**

Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America 800/727-8462

Allergy and Asthma Network/Mothers of Asthmatics, Inc. 800/878-4403

American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology 800/822-2762

National Jewish Medical and Research Center (Lung Line) 800/222-5864