

STAYING AWAY FROM ALLERGIC TRIGGERS

Tree, grass and weed pollens

- Stay indoors on days with a high pollen index
- Keep windows closed on hot windy days
- Change your clothes and shower after you have been outdoors (in your relevant pollen season)
- Pollen seasons in British Columbia:
 - Trees: February-July
 - Grass: April-September
 - Weeds: August-October

Dust mites

- Dust mites are microscopic 8-legged insects that are found in pillows, mattresses, carpeting, upholstered furniture, etc. that feed on human skin flakes. Proteins in the body and feces of the mites cause allergic reactions
- Decrease humidity in your home to <50%
- Minimize stuffed animals and other furry animals, especially on your bed
- Remove wall to wall carpets
- Use mite-proof covers to encase mattresses and pillows: These are tightly woven fabric covers that completely encase the mattresses and pillow and zip shut. Ensure that they are labeled dust mite proof. May be purchased from Sears (Aller-Ease) or Allergy Canada (www.allergyca.com)
- Wash bed linens regularly using hot water (55°C)
- Vacuum regularly

*The above measures can help reduce the presence of the dust mites but will not eliminate them completely. You will have a better chance of reducing dust mites if multiple interventions are used instead of just one.

Cats, dogs and other animals

- Removal of the animal from the home is the most effective
- Once the pet is removed, it can take months for the air to be clear of the animal allergen
- If removal is not possible, minimize exposure to the animal:
 - Keep it out of the bedroom and living room
 - Wash the pet 1-2 times per week
- Using a HEPA room air cleaner may decrease the amount of airborne allergen
- There is no such thing as a hypoallergenic dog or cat because many proteins in the skin and saliva are allergenic

Mold

- Avoid outdoor mold found in rotting logs, fallen leaves, compost piles, etc.
- Clean visible indoor mold found in moist rooms (ie. kitchen, bathroom, basement) with diluted bleach
- A dehumidifier may be helpful for moist rooms
- Ensure there are no water leaks in your home
- Removing potted house plants may be helpful as mold may be found in the soil

The above recommendations all come from Allergy Physicians and are within the AAAAI practice parameter