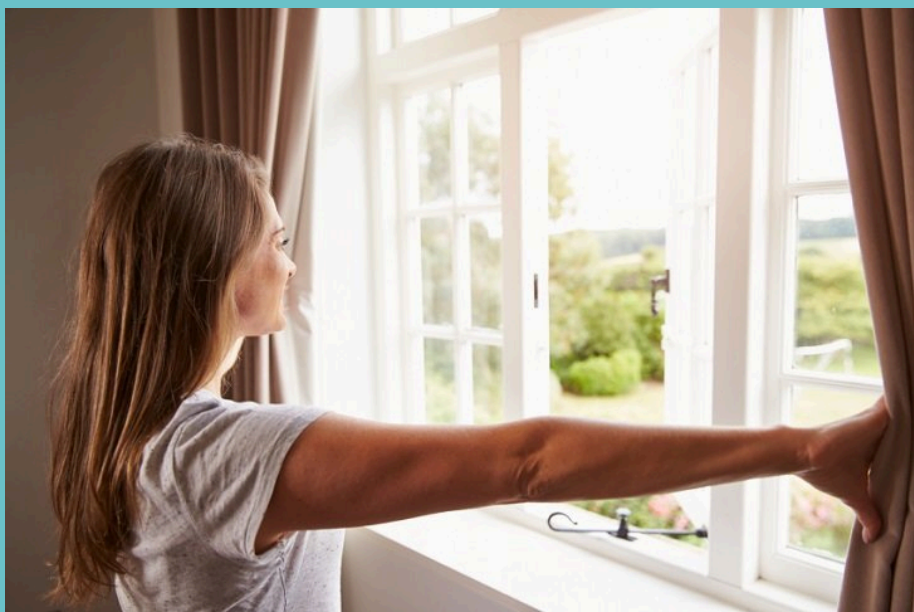


Allergy-Friendly Lifestyle: Tips for creating a low-allergen environment



Abstract

Creating a low-allergen environment is essential for those who suffer from allergies. This guide provides practical tips and strategies to help you reduce allergens in your home and improve indoor air quality. Key areas covered include understanding common household allergens, implementing effective cleaning strategies, and managing pets to minimize allergens. Additionally, the guide offers insights into improving indoor air quality and creating an allergy-free sleep environment.

By following these tips, you can create a healthier, more comfortable living space and enjoy a better quality of life, free from the triggers that cause allergic reactions. Whether you are an allergy sufferer or looking to prevent allergies, this guide offers valuable advice for maintaining a low-allergen home.

Introduction

Creating an allergy-friendly environment is crucial for enhancing your well-being and comfort, especially if you or your loved ones suffer from allergies. Allergens like dust mites, mold, pet dander, and pollen can trigger a range of symptoms, from mild irritation to severe reactions. An allergy-friendly lifestyle aims to minimize exposure to these triggers, improving your quality of life and overall health.

This guide provides practical and actionable tips to help you establish a low-allergen home. From understanding common allergens and implementing effective cleaning practices to managing pets and improving indoor air quality, each section offers valuable insights to help you create a healthier living space. By adopting these strategies, you can enjoy a cleaner, more comfortable home that supports your well-being and reduces allergy symptoms.

Transform your home into a sanctuary of comfort and health with our expert tips for creating a low-allergen environment that keeps allergens at bay and your well-being at its best.

1. Understanding Common Household Allergens

Indoor allergies are allergies that are triggered by allergens commonly found in the home or other indoor locations. Common indoor allergies include mold, dust mites, pet dander, and even cockroaches. Indoor allergies may be less seasonal and more difficult to avoid than allergies to outdoor substances, and they can be just as debilitating.

Causes



Allergic reactions occur when your immune system becomes overly sensitive to certain substances (called allergens). Your immune system will then release chemical mediators such as histamine in response to the allergen.

These substances cause symptoms. Blocking histamine with medications called antihistamines can alleviate symptoms. It is not always possible to identify why some individuals' immune systems overreact, but allergies may be hereditary.

Indoor allergies are also strongly associated with asthma, a long-term disease of the lungs causing the airways to narrow and restrict breathing.

Most Common Indoor Allergies

Dust Mites

Dust mites are tiny arthropods that can only be seen with a microscope. They feed off of tiny flakes of shed human skin and can be found in furniture, carpeting, bedding, and plush toys. Mites prefer warm and humid environments.

Specific ways you can reduce dust mites in your home include:

- Reducing humidity
- Frequently vacuuming with a vacuum that has a certified filter
- Placing dustproof covers over mattresses and pillows

- Washing your bedding in hot water at least weekly
- Reducing the amount of carpeting (and rugs) in your home
- Using specialized filters on your central air-conditioner

Animal Dander

Some people are allergic to proteins found on animal fur, skin, saliva, or urine. Symptoms of animal dander allergies are similar to the other indoor allergies.

Specific ways you can reduce animal dander in your home include:

- Keeping pets out of your bedroom or sleeping area
- Keeping pets off of your furniture as much as possible
- Having someone who is not allergic regularly brush and groom your pet outdoors
- Frequently vacuuming with a vacuum that has a certified filter
- Limiting the amount of carpeting (and rugs) in your home

Mold

Mold and fungi reproduce and grow through spores that are released into the air and then inhaled, causing an allergic reaction.

You can be allergic to both indoor and outdoor molds.

Indoor mold allergies can cause year-round symptoms. In the home, the most likely places to encounter these spores are areas that are prone to dampness or water damage, such as the kitchen or bathroom.

You can reduce mold spores in your home by:

- Adding a certified filter to the central heating and air-conditioning unit in your home
- Lowering the humidity in your home
- Reducing dampness in your home, such as by cleaning up spilled water and fixing plumbing leaks
- Using exhaust fans and ventilating your home by opening doors and windows
- Not allowing laundry, bedding, or carpets to remain wet or damp

Cockroaches

Cockroaches are common in many parts of the world, especially in warmer climates.

The body parts, saliva, and droppings from cockroaches contain proteins that some people are allergic to. Cockroach allergies are known for triggering asthma attacks.

Some steps you can take to reduce this allergen in your home include:

- Put a tight lid on all of your garbage cans.
- Do not leave dirty dishes or pet bowls out.
- Be proactive in cleaning up any crumbs or bits of food from your floors or other areas of your home.
- Clean up water spills and fix plumbing issues promptly, as dampness may attract cockroaches.
- Use bait and traps or hire an exterminator to control the number of cockroaches in your home.

- Seal cracks in your walls and floors, which may allow the bugs to enter your home.
- Store food in containers that cannot be accessed by bugs.

Symptoms

Regardless of the culprit, most indoor allergies cause similar symptoms. They also tend to be a problem year-round rather than at certain times of the year, like seasonal or weather-related allergies.

Common Indoor Allergy Symptoms



Some common symptoms of indoor allergies include:

- Sneezing
- Runny nose
- Congestion
- Itchy eyes or throat
- Hives or skin rashes
- Cough
- Fatigue

More severe symptoms of indoor allergies include:

- Wheezing
- Shortness of breath
- Severe and frequent sinusitis
- Malaise (general feeling of being unwell)

Diagnosis

An immunologist (a doctor who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of allergies) can diagnose allergies.

In addition to a review of your symptoms and a physical examination, the following [tests](#) are commonly used to diagnose allergies:

- IgE (immunoglobulin E) antibody testing
- Skin scratch or skin prick testing, in which a small amount of a suspected allergen is inserted into the skin to see if it causes a reaction

When to Seek Treatment

You should consult a healthcare provider anytime you have had bothersome or unrelieved symptoms lasting longer than a few weeks. You should go to the emergency room or call 911 if you have difficulty breathing or feel like your throat is swelling or closing. This is a symptom of a life-threatening allergic reaction known as anaphylaxis.

Treatment

Treatment for indoor allergies usually involves a combination of medication and measures to reduce your exposure to the allergen.

The following medications are common for the treatment of indoor allergies:

- Nonsedating antihistamines, such as Zyrtec (cetirizine) or Allegra (fexofenadine)
- Sedating antihistamines like Benadryl (diphenhydramine), which can be used if allergy symptoms are interfering with sleep (but are not preferred for long-term use and should be used with caution in patients at risk for falls)
- Nasal corticosteroids, such as Advair or Flonase (fluticasone), Qvar (beclomethasone), or Entocort (budesonide)
- Oral or nasal decongestants, such as Sudafed (pseudoephedrine) or Afrin (oxymetazoline), which can be used for a few days for symptoms that are not relieved by antihistamines and/or nasal corticosteroids (but should not be used long-term due to side effects)
- Leukotriene receptor antagonists, such as Singulair (montelukast), which are sometimes prescribed for symptoms that are not relieved with the above therapies. They are not first-line agents, and patients should be aware of the boxed warning for neurological and psychiatric adverse events that can occur in some patients who take Singulair.

Avoiding triggers (substances that bring on an allergy) is an important part of treatment.

Common ways of controlling indoor allergies include adequate housecleaning, proper ventilation, air purifiers, humidity control and pest control (for cockroaches), and repairing broken pipes or water damage.

Immunotherapy

In some cases, your allergy symptoms may be reduced or cured through immunotherapy. Immunotherapy usually comes in the form of an allergy shot, but recently sublingual (under the tongue) versions have become available for some types of allergies. Immunotherapy works by exposing you to a small amount of the substance you are allergic to over a long period of time. This should help desensitize your immune system. Immunotherapy must be administered under the supervision of your healthcare provider and can involve a significant time commitment.



Indoor allergies are triggered by allergens commonly found indoors or inside your home, including mold, dust mites, and pet dander. They can cause mild to severe symptoms, but can be treated with allergy medications or immunotherapy.

2. Effective Cleaning Strategies to Reduce Allergens

Whether it's pollen, dust or mold that gets up your nose, keep symptoms at bay with these top cleaning tips for allergy sufferers.

Anyone who suffers from allergies will know how frustrating it can be, mainly if triggered inside your own home, so familiarizing yourself with recommended cleaning tips for allergy sufferers is well worth the effort.

While regular cleaning is the best way to keep symptoms at bay, it can also worsen them if not done correctly. As well as being mindful of your methods, you'll need to implement them routinely in order to allergy-proof your home to the best effect.

Ideally, you'd have someone in the house who wasn't an allergy sufferer who could take on the bulk of the cleaning, particularly if it's not been done in a while. But if that's not possible, we've put together a list of allergy-friendly cleaning tips, approved by the experts, that should make it a more bearable chore... in terms of health, at least!

Cleaning Tips For Allergy Sufferers

'It's important to note that for allergy sufferers, 'regular' cleaning doesn't just mean giving your home a quick dust and vacuum. Other tasks such as washing bedding, curtains, and upholstery, wiping down surfaces, and using a HEPA filter are essential if reducing allergens is the goal,' says Karina Toner, operations manager at home cleaning service, Spekless.

1. WEAR A MASK



(Image credit: Alamy)

It may sound simple, but one of the best allergy-friendly cleaning tips we can offer is to wear a mask, available at Amazon. Choose one that covers your mouth and nose, for extra protection.

If you're prone to skin flare-ups, it's a good idea to wear gloves, too.

Any dust you've disturbed during your deep clean can take a while to settle, so once you've finished cleaning, either leave the mask on for a few hours or try and leave the house if you can.

2. AVOID CHEMICALS AT ALL COSTS

(Image credit: Alamy)

It's not just dust and pollen that can cause sniffing and sneezing. If you're not careful with what products you use, the very act of cleaning can cause a flare-up of symptoms.

'Look out for cleaning products that contain ammonia, chlorine, or formaldehyde, as these can be particularly irritating for those with allergies. Other things to avoid include phthalates, parabens and synthetic fragrances, often found in air fresheners, fabric softeners and

detergents. In general, you want to choose products labeled as hypoallergenic or fragrance-free. If you're unsure about anything, ask your doctor or allergist for advice,' says Karina.

3. ... AND TAKE THE NATURAL APPROACH



(Image credit: Getty Images)

'You can create your own, homemade cleaning solutions using pantry shelf staples, that can be extremely effective at reducing allergens. For example, mixing equal parts water and vinegar can be used as a natural disinfectant and deodorizer. Baking soda, at Walmart, can be used to absorb odors and clean surfaces, and lemon juice can be used to remove stains and grime,' says Karina.

4. FORGO DUSTERS FOR DAMP MICROFIBER CLOTHS

(Image credit: Getty images / xefstock)

When it comes to removing dust, a microfiber cloth should be your first choice, whether you're an allergy sufferer or not. They attract dust rather than just pushing it around like traditional cotton versions – even more so when they're damp. For hard or wooden floors, make life easier by using a microfiber mop, available from Amazon.

5. USE AN HEPA VACUUM

(Image credit: Getty images)

If you're wondering whether vacuums really help allergies, the answer is yes, absolutely. As long as you're using one with a HEPA (high-efficiency particulate air) filter, that is.

These models are designed to capture and trap harmful allergens like dust mites, pollen, and pet hair, rather than releasing them back into the room like other vacuums do. By the time you've finished, the air itself is cleaner – as well as your floors!', says lifelong allergy-sufferer Penny Nicholas, cleaning expert and founder of online publication, Sparkling Penny.

Featuring a whole-machine HEPA filtration system, the Dyson V8, available on Amazon, is a great option to consider, and the filter is washable, too.

As they're renowned for harboring allergens, you'll need to deep clean carpets at least once a year. Take the opportunity to clean your upholstery and clean your curtains, too, but avoid using any kind of shampoo unless it's hypoallergenic and suitable for the type of fabric.

Spring cleaning can be particularly challenging for allergy sufferers. This section offers specific tips to minimize allergens during your spring cleaning routine, ensuring a fresher, healthier home environment.

❖ **Spring Cleaning for Allergy Sufferers: Tips for a Breath of Fresh Air**

Spring can be considered a season of rebirth and regrowth, and a lot of people like it. However, allergy sufferers might have mixed feelings about this season. This is because spring is a tough period, particularly for indoor air quality, not only because of the environmental shifts but the changes people make in their homes.

Whether you are an allergy sufferer or not, maintaining good indoor air quality is paramount. However, it holds way more importance for allergy sufferers in comparison to other people. The increase in pollen count and other similar allergens makes spring a difficult time for most people with allergies. This is where spring cleaning can prove to be useful in reducing allergies. Because it is a common issue, most professionals who offer cheap end of lease cleaning Sydney also offer spring cleaning services. You can also do the cleaning work yourself if you can learn some tips.

Here are spring cleaning tips for allergy sufferers. Employ them to reduce allergies.

1. Ensure The Allergens Do Not Enter Your Home

Due to increased allergens in the air, most allergy sufferers experience difficulty, which is particularly true during the spring season. Even people without allergies should understand that increased air pollutants and allergens negatively affect air quality. The best thing to do is ensure they do not enter your home. It is best recommended to stay in your home when outside allergens are higher than usual. Keep the windows and doors closed.

Next, make sure there is no dust in your home. Regularly dust all the surfaces in your living space. This includes bookshelves, window sills, tables, etc. Using a duster will be a good option.

2. Prefer Using Less Toxic Cleaning Products

Tasks like cleaning out closets can come under spring cleaning. It might also include deep cleaning your entire home. This typically means you will need to use many cleaning products. Most standard and commercial household cleaning products are considered common sources of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), which can cause allergies.

Experts who do professional end of lease cleaning Sydney recommend using less harmful products. Ideally, you should use DIY cleaning products that contain natural ingredients. This will help you decrease the amount of VOCs.

3. Maintain Proper Ventilation When Cleaning



During the house cleaning procedure, it is best recommended to maintain proper ventilation. Opening windows and doors are the best things to do. Just make sure the pollen levels are not higher than usual.

If it is, it might be better to invest in a mechanical ventilation system. A system like that will certainly increase the amount of fresh air that enters your home. It will enhance the air circulation without negatively impacting the air quality.

4. Use A Vacuum Cleaner On Carpets And Rugs

Rugs and carpets are known to shelter allergens, which include pet dander and dust mites. This is why vacuuming them frequently is highly recommended, especially if you are an allergy sufferer. This will help you get rid of dust and allergens and decrease your exposure to them. A HEPA-filtered vacuum will capture even the tiniest particle of the allergens. This is why it is used for expert end of lease cleaning Sydney.

5. Replace The Air Filters When Needed

Replacing the air filters is one of the most crucial tasks you can include in your spring cleaning checklist. In fact, if you always want to breathe in the fresh air, make it a habit to inspect and change the air filters frequently.

If you are not on a routine at present, spring months are the perfect time to get started. Having clean, unclogged, and healthy filters is one of the easiest ways of improving indoor air quality.

Besides just affecting air quality, replacing filters helps your HVAC system function correctly. You can find plenty of different options for home air filters. The quality will play a major role in determining how frequently it will need to be replaced. If you get a cheap one, checking it once each month will be required.

6. Regularly Wash The Bedding

Just the thought of dust mites joining you every night in bed to harm you can be unpleasant. This is why experts who do cheap end of lease cleaning Sydney recommend washing your bedding at least once each week in hot water. Spring season is considered a perfect time to clean your mattress thoroughly and get rid of the dust mites that were around during the winter. You will need to use baking soda for this job.

Sprinkle it generously on the mattress and allow it to soak for no less than 30 minutes. Follow up with using a vacuum cleaner that has an upholstery attachment. Once it is completely dry, wrap the mattress in a cover that is allergy-proof.

7. Invest In An Air Purifier

Using an air purifier is a great way to improve the indoor air quality during the spring season. It will help reduce the toxic indoor air pollutants, including the springtime pollutants and allergens. This is very helpful for allergy sufferers who face difficulty during this season.

A HEPA air purifier is ideal for this job. Focus on maintenance of this system during the peak allergy season to ensure optimal performance.

Wrapping Up

If you suffer from allergies, you must maintain good indoor air quality. Failing to do so, especially during the spring season, will make it impossible to maintain an allergy-free space. Follow the tips mentioned in this article to welcome fresh air and keep allergens and pollutants away.

3. Improving Indoor Air Quality

With temperatures dropping, more people are hunkering indoors and spending extra time at home. The extended hours inside can be great for relationships, downtime, and one's mental health; but a lack of fresh air can also mean increased susceptibility to allergens and airborne diseases.

The most common pathogens frequently spread indoors include whooping cough, measles, Covid-19, Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV), the flu, and the common cold. Polluted indoor air from mold and fungi growth, pet dander, pest allergens, and dust mites can also be bad for anyone prone to allergies. "The air is drier in the winter which means that we are more susceptible to indoor allergens and some allergens are more likely to become and stay airborne for longer as well," says Jeffrey Siegel, a professor of civil and mineral engineering at the University of Toronto.

The good news is that experts say and research shows that there are some simple steps anyone can take to improve the quality of their indoor air during winter months.

Open a window



The first step, though it might seem obvious, is to crack a window or two. "Homes are typically ventilated by open doors and windows," says Jordan Peccia, a professor of environmental engineering at Yale School of Public Health. "When we close windows in the winter to save on energy, allergens that have indoor sources such as dust mites or pet dander are not removed by ventilation and that can result in greater concentrations (of allergens) indoors."

Have your air ducts cleaned

Another way of improving indoor air quality is to attack contaminants at a common but often overlooked source: the home air duct system. "The purpose of a forced air distribution system is to make sure that heating, cooling, and sometimes ventilation gets to all parts of the home," explains Siegel. "So, when the system is operating, it can also serve to spread allergens or anything else in the air from one space to other spaces."

Erik Schweitzer, regional operations manager of KC Clean Air in Lee's Summit Missouri, says he's seen "several inches" of dirt, skin dust, pet dander, and even pest droppings throughout many of the residential air duct systems his company has cleaned and sanitized over the years.

"When people purchase a home, they never think to look in their air ducts and are often surprised by how much they've been breathing in from the previous occupants," he says. He explains that the ductwork of newly constructed homes can be especially bad. "When a home is being built, the air duct system is one of the first things put in and during construction

each vent opening can fill with dirt, sawdust, debris and even cigarette butts from the workers," Schweitzer warns. "Usually, none of that is cleared out when the finish work is done and the vent covers are put in place, so the new homeowners end up breathing all that in from the day they move in."

What's more, the Environmental Protection Agency notes that air duct cleaning is not always necessary, but says on its website that, "if not properly installed, maintained and operated, (air ducts) may become contaminated with particles of dust, pollen or other debris. If moisture is present, the potential for microbiological growth (e.g., mold) is increased and spores from such growth may be released into the home's living space. Some of these contaminants may cause allergic reactions or other symptoms in people if they are exposed to them."

As such, Peccia recommends keeping one's air duct system "clean and well maintained" to "improve the air quality in your home."

Frequently change the filter of your HVAC system

Similarly, changing one's home furnace and A/C filter as often as recommended is another important step to reduce the spread of allergens, pollutants, and other contaminants. "The best defense is to have a good filter, install it properly so there are no gaps, and change it frequently," Siegel says. "If done well, this will go a long way to reducing the spread of allergens by the system."

While there are many good furnace filters to choose from, Jim Manwill, co-owner of Manwill Plumbing and Heating in Salt Lake City Utah, recommends choosing one with a high MERV rating. "The higher the MERV number, the better the filtration," he says. "A MERV 5 to a MERV 10 rating is a good filter for most homeowners," he says.

And though changing one's HVAC filter will make the biggest difference, the experts stressed the importance of checking other filters around the home as well. For instance, the filters in one's vacuum cleaner, clothes dryer, and appliance vents are also important to clean and switch out from time to time.

Keep surfaces clean and tidy



Another important way to cut down on allergens and the spread of airborne viruses is to frequently clean and sanitize surfaces. On its website, The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention notes that in addition to good hygiene, "cleaning and disinfecting surfaces can also reduce the risk of infection."

To reduce the buildup of allergens in addition to infection, Carver recommends "cleaning surfaces and keeping them free of clutter." That's especially important because unkempt areas of the home can lead to rodent or insect infestations - each additional sources of potentially problematic allergens.

While cleaning surfaces in every area of the home is important to eliminate dust particles, Carver says it's best to "focus on your sleeping areas such as bedrooms first and then try to tackle other areas in your home."

Carver also recommends, "washing bedding weekly in warm water and detergent" and to using a "high heat setting" when using the clothes dryer.

Keep rugs and carpets cleaned, too

Indeed, vacuuming is one of the most important things one can do to keep allergens at bay - but it can also make matters worse for a period of time the allergy-prone should avoid. "Vacuuming stirs up a lot of particles, including allergens," Siegel says. As such, "allergy-sensitive individuals shouldn't be around during or right after vacuuming."

Neglecting vacuuming altogether will only make matters worse in the long run though as rugs and carpets are proven magnets for dust, dirt and numerous allergy particles in the home. "As people do normal activities in the home such as walking around on carpeting or sitting on cloth furnishings, allergens get resuspended into the air," warns Hildemann. "Dust mites are found throughout the home...but they tend to be most resistant to effective cleaning when they land on a cloth surface or on carpeting."

To keep such allergens at bay, Carver recommends vacuuming one's home once or twice every week.

Use cooking vents

Another simple step anyone can take to improve indoor air quality this winter is to use built-in cooling vents in one's appliances. That's because many indoor air pollutants come from one's kitchen, and electric and gas stoves in particular can release harmful contaminants or pollutants into the home. Indeed, studies show carbon monoxide concentrations are elevated in the home when the stove is used without using the range hood as well.

As such, "carbon monoxide detectors are a must for every home," Manwill advises. "Protect yourself and your family by installing at least one detector on each level of your home." Utilizing built-in kitchen ventilation systems or opening windows will also cut down on other pollutants when cooking. "Use exhaust fans in your bathrooms and kitchen," suggests Carver. From cleaning surfaces and furniture to buying houseplants, indoor air quality interventions are important in any home, especially because allergens can affect each individual in very different ways.

"A person with eczema may get incredibly itchy when in bed because beds are great places for dust mites, a person with asthma may have allergic asthma episodes related to cat allergens, and a person with mold allergy may have sneezing and itchy nose and eyes when mold grows in their home," explains Carver. "Every person is different on how sensitive their immune system is to an allergen."

4. Creating an Allergy-Free Sleep Environment

Your bedroom is supposed to be your sanctuary, a place where you can relax, unwind, and watch many hours of Netflix with no judgment. However, that's easier said than done for an allergy sufferer. How is one supposed to feel at peace when they're plagued with incessant sneezing and a ticklish nose?

If your allergies always act up at home, or you frequently wake up with nightmarish sinuses, your bedroom is probably to blame. It's chock-full of the most common indoor allergens, from mold and dander to the collection of dust mites rallying on your bedsheets. Since these dust mites (actually, their excrement) love beds that provide warmth, humidity, and food (i.e., our dead skin cells), our supposed sanctuary is also theirs.

If you're not sure what's causing your symptoms, you might want to start with an allergy test first. "When it comes to allergies, knowledge is power," says Jeffrey S. Dlott, MD, MS, senior medical director for Quest Diagnostics. "It's important to have a better understanding of any conditions you may have in order to improve behaviors for your health." These days, doing that is easier than ever with at-home kits that allow you to test yourself for indoor allergies right at home. Platforms like QuestDirect Indoor Respiratory Allergy Panel can provide results within three to five days and help identify specific triggers.

Only use hypoallergenic bedding



Speaking of sheets, switching to hypoallergenic bedding can significantly relieve your allergy symptoms by preventing dust mites from reproducing. Materials like organic cotton, wool, bamboo, and microfiber are made of moisture-wicking, antimicrobial materials that are naturally resistant to dust mites and mildew. Down alternative comforters are also less likely to trigger allergies. And the higher thread count the better, since a tight-weave structure eliminates gaps where allergens like to thrive.

But most allergists agree the best hypoallergenic fabric is silk, which not only fights off allergens but also soothes sensitive skin. (Fun fact: Silkworms produce a protein that makes silk resistant to germs, dust mites, and other allergens.)¹ Although it's a bit of an investment, its allergy-proof qualities—plus the long list of hair and skin benefits—could be worth the splurge.

Apply dust-proof covers

To go the extra mile, apply tightly woven covers with zippered encasements on pillows, mattresses, box springs, and other items unable or unlikely to be washed. This will keep dust mites out and prevent them from multiplying on your bed.

Think of your pajamas as another cover (for your shedding skin), so it's best to change into freshly laundered jammies every night. As a precaution, make sure your PJs are washed with hypoallergenic.

❖ **Tips for maintaining a clean bedroom environment**

If your allergies act up when you're at home, your bedroom is probably one of your problem areas.

It's key to make the room less cozy to mold, dust mites, and other allergens that make you sneeze and snuffle.

1. Kick Dust Mites Out of Bed

These microscopic bugs can trigger allergies and asthma. They can often be found living in your bedding.

You can take some steps to get rid of them:

- Put dust-mite-proof covers on pillows, comforters, mattresses, and box springs.
- Wash your blankets, sheets, and pillowcases every week in water that is at least 130 F. Dry everything in a hot dryer.

2. Vacuum Regularly

Carpet is a popular place for dust mites. Consider replacing it in your bedroom with hardwood floors or linoleum and washable area rugs.

If you must have carpet in your bedroom:

- Choose the low-nap or low-pile kind, which holds fewer allergens.
- Clean it using a vacuum with a HEPA filter and a double bag every week. Wear a dust mask while you vacuum so you don't inhale dust that floats up into the air.
- Do housework during the day, not the evening, so dust has a couple of hours to settle before you go to sleep.

3. Use Light and Breezy Window Treatments

Say goodbye to dust catchers like blinds and heavy, dry-clean-only drapes. Try washable curtains and roller shades, instead.

Wipe window frames and glass regularly to prevent mold and mildew. Both can trigger upper respiratory symptoms if you have allergies or asthma.

4. Declutter Your Bedroom



Keep things simple to breathe better. Cut back on knickknacks and fabric. The less upholstery in the room, the better.

Move books, magazines, and decorative items to another room, so you can dust less often. Don't store things under your bed, and don't leave dirty clothes on the floor.

5. Protect Bedroom Air

Dust mites and mold like a warm, damp room, but you probably don't.

- When it's warm, use your air conditioner, even if you're tempted by the outdoor breeze.
- If you live in a sweaty-weather climate, use a dehumidifier to keep humidity at 30% to 50%.
- Turn down the heat or turn up the AC. Dust mites can't breed as well at temperatures below 77 F.
- Check carpeting for signs of mold or mildew, especially near windows. If you notice condensation on windows or window frames, try to find the cause. Find out how to deal with it so it doesn't lead to mold.
- Don't leave damp or sweaty clothes in the hamper. That's a perfect breeding ground for mold. Empty the hamper every day.

You may want to try an air-filtration system that uses a small-particle or HEPA filter to keep the air in your bedroom cleaner. These filters work in central air conditioning and heating systems and in portable AC units.

Bottom Line

Transforming your home into an allergy-free haven is not just about comfort—it's essential for your health and well-being. By integrating smart practices like reducing indoor allergens, choosing effective cleaning solutions, and creating dedicated allergen-free zones, you can significantly enhance your quality of life.

Embrace these simple yet powerful changes to breathe easier, live healthier, and enjoy a more serene, allergen-free environment. Start today and experience the difference in your daily comfort and peace of mind!

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