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Your Indoor Life!



We often think of our homes as “safe-havens” away from things that will make us sick. After all, our homes are the one place where we feel we have control of our environment.

You’ll be surprised to learn that you are living with some unwelcome guests that by their very presence, can cause you quite a bit of misery.

Dust Mites, Pet Dander and Molds are the culprits. We’ll give you a good foundation for what can be done to regain the upper hand.

Pollen Count

You can check the pollen count for your location by simply going to...

<http://www.pollen.com>

Greetings!

It may surprise you to learn that we are in the midst of one of the worst Arizona allergy seasons we have had in many years. And, if you are an active outdoors person, your body is likely serving up some rather unpleasant symptoms about now.

So, what do you do? Logically, you seek relief indoors away from the wind and pollen in the hope that your symptoms are reduced or disappear altogether. Unfortunately, hope is not a solution.

Your indoor life is as problematic as your outdoor encounters with allergens. So, we are going to devote this newsletter to what you can do to improve your indoor environment with some practical solutions guaranteed to provide relief.

We need to start with the occupants of your home. Beyond the obvious... You and your loved ones are not the only occupants. You have a number of others. Some are invited, others not so welcome. While your cat(s) or dog(s) (if you have one or the other, or both) may be much loved, they are one of the big three of indoor allergy sources. The others are dust mites and molds, the uninvited guests that are particularly unwelcomed.

Control of your allergies really does begin at home so let’s get started with some sound practices and effective solutions that you need to know.

As always, we wish you good health and appreciation for your continued interest.

Sincerely,

Sharon Gwozdek

Sharon Gwozdek, RN, BSN
Editor

Allergy Control Starts Right Here!

Creating a healthier indoor living environment for you and your family is a critical step toward relieving allergy symptoms. Reducing your exposure to indoor allergens from dust mites, molds and pet dander can reduce or eliminate allergy symptoms altogether.

So, where do you begin?

In The Bedroom!

Dust Mites

It is in your bedroom that you spend one-third of your life. And it is here where you will find allergy-causing dust mites... in your bed to be precise. Dust mites are eight-legged arachnids and are relatives to spiders and ticks. Smaller than the period at the end of this

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Dust mites are smaller than the period at the end of this sentence and cannot be seen by the naked eye.

The average life-cycle of a dust mite is 10 to 19 days.

Exposure to temperatures over 60 °C (140 °F) for a period of one hour or freezing, exposure to temperatures below 0 °C (32 °F), will typically prove fatal to house dust mites; a relative humidity less than 50 percent may also be fatal.

Dust Mites (continued)

sentence they cannot be seen by the naked eye. It is possible that you are sharing your bed with a million of them. A female dust mite can lay 25 – 50 eggs every 3 weeks so you can understand why so many of them can appear.



Dust mites feed on your organic detritus...the flakes of skin you shed every night in your bedroom. What's more, they flourish in the stable environment you have unwittingly provided for them. They thrive in dark, warm and humid environments. Sounds like a cozy warm bed, doesn't it? To be more specific...

- Pillows
- Mattresses
- Comforters
- Blankets
- Carpets
- Upholstered furniture

It is not the dust mite itself that causes allergy symptoms; rather, it is a combination of its waste particles and dead body fragments. House dust mites are a common cause of asthma and allergy symptoms worldwide. Some of the gut enzymes (notably proteases) produced by the dust mite persist in their fecal matter, and can be strongly allergenic.

The average life cycle for a male house dust mite is 10 to 19 days. A mated female house dust mite can live for 70 days, laying 60 to 100 eggs in the last 5 weeks of her life. In a 10-week life span, a house dust mite will produce approximately 2,000 fecal particles and an even larger number of partially digested enzyme-covered dust particles.

Fact: A single gram of dust can contain more than 100,00 dust mite waste particles.

Now before you go into a total state of shock and vow never to sleep in your bed again, it should be noted that even the cleanest of homes harbors dust mites. What's more, we are host to all sorts of critters whose existence we are not the slightest bit aware of. Isn't life interesting?

Now before you retreat to the pristine cleanliness of your bathtubs for a good night's sleep (Be sure to plug the drain if you do), you'll be happy to know that dust mites and their allergy inducing waste particles can be contained and controlled.

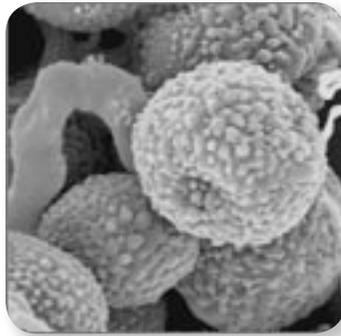
Containment and Eradication

Disodium octaborate tetrahydrate powder is often used to eradicate house dust mites. A simple washing will remove most of the waste matter. Exposure to temperatures over 60 °C (140 °F) for a period of one hour or freezing, exposure to temperatures below 0 °C (32 °F), will typically prove fatal to house dust mites; a relative humidity less than 50 percent may also be fatal. Ten minutes in a household clothes dryer at lethal temperatures has been shown to be sufficient to kill all the dust mites in bedding. House dust mites reproduce quickly enough that their effect on human health can be significant. Avoidance of dust mites and their allergens is the best course of action for those with dust mite allergies. The use of bedding encasing that acts as a barrier to the dust mite and its allergens is a good first step. The bedding encasing should also be breathable and be able to withstand frequent washing. However, a home allergen reduction plan has been recognized as being an essential part to the management of allergy symptoms. And therefore all aspects of the home environment should be considered (proper vacuuming, use of air cleaners, off-gassing from paint and use of safer cleaning products, etc).

Call Allergy and Environmental Treatment Center for recommendations on allergy control products.

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Mold Spores



Mold will thrive almost anywhere where there is moisture, oxygen and organic matter. How many places in your home do these conditions exist? Most likely, it is your shower and dark, damp places where they can be found. Molds can occur anywhere in your home where the conditions are right.

Molds are far from harmless. In addition to looking absolutely awful, they can wreak havoc on you with a host of symptoms and some are even life threatening.

The allergy/addiction phenomenon is one of the strangest manifestations of a food allergy.

- First, you could be allergic to them. This occurs in 10% to 20% of cases. Allergy testing would identify mold sensitivity.
- Second, substances called ergosterol and glucan in the walls of the mold cell can cause hay fever-like symptoms with itchy, red, and watery eyes and nasal congestion. You don't have to be allergic -- anyone could react to these.
- Third, molds release organic compounds such as benzene and acetone that would raise alarms in any workplace and are linked to nausea, dizziness, and headaches. Again, you don't have to be allergic.
- And last, molds, like other organisms, don't want competition for food and nurturing, so they expel mycotoxins to kill competitors such as bacteria. In the case of helpful mycotoxins, we call these antibiotics and use them to help us when needed. But in the case of some molds, the mycotoxins target cells within our bodies and cause problems such as cancer, stillbirths, and bleeding in infants. *Stachybotrys* makes a lot of these harmful mycotoxins.

Add mold to the growing list of household hazards that insurers won't cover. After suffering steep losses relating to mold-related claims between 2001 and 2003, property and casualty insurers moved quickly to restrict coverage for mold damage in states such as California, Texas and Florida, where heat and humidity create an ideal breeding ground for mold.

Where Molds Hide

Most molds grow on wood, fiber, or paper that has gotten wet for more than a few days. Green bread mold is one of the least harmful molds, but it should be avoided. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the tiny mold spores waft through the air and land on inviting damp spots. The spores then get blown up into ventilation systems and are distributed around the house.

What You Can Do To Control Mold?

The only way to get rid of the mold permanently is to get rid of the moisture.

- Fix leaks and seepage, even if it involves landscaping around basements.
- Put plastic over dirt in crawlspaces and keep them well ventilated.
- Use exhaust fans in kitchen and bathrooms.
- Turn off humidifiers if you see condensation on windows.
- Use dehumidifiers and air conditioners, especially in hot, humid climates.
- Pay special attention to carpet on concrete floors. Use area rugs that can be lifted and washed. Or install a vapor barrier over the concrete.

Molds should not be taken lightly. Your vigilance will go a long way toward preventing them from proliferating and getting totally out of control.

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Cats are one of the most potent allergy triggers, but a sensitive person can have a reaction to almost any furry or feathered animal.

Check Out Our New Website!



Our new patient-centered website provides useful information about allergies, their causes and what can be done to effectively treat them. We invite you to pay us a visit. Go to.....

www.allergyenvironmental.com

Pet Dander Everywhere!

Potent Allergy Triggers

As much as we love our pets, they are a source of allergens that can trigger reactions that are mild on one end of the scale to severe on the other.

Knowing how to avoid pet dander is important if animal dander is one of your allergy triggers. Pet dander is an airborne trigger that is often found in indoor environments year round. It is commonly believed that an animal's hair is what causes pet allergies, but this is not true. In fact, it is the proteins found in dander, urine, and saliva from pets that are at work. Dander is the dead skin flakes that are shed from an animal. In cats and dogs, dander and saliva are primarily allergic triggers, while urine can be the allergen in other animals, such as rabbits, guinea pigs and hamsters. Cats are one of the most potent allergy triggers, but a sensitive person can have a reaction to almost any furry or feathered animal. Whether the animal is long-or-short-haired does not matter.



Of course, the best course of action if you are allergic to pet dander is not to have pets, but since that is not an acceptable option for many people, then at least work on the following actions:

Tips on How to Avoid Pet Dander

1. Maintain a "no pet zone" in the bedroom. Your trigger avoidance efforts will go a long way if you can keep animals out of sleeping areas. If you can keep them out of the main living areas too, even better.
2. Keep pets clean and groomed. Weekly brushing and washing of pets (by a non-allergic person) is believed to keep animal dander levels down in the home.
3. Provide a litter box for cats to make waste in. Make sure the litter box is not kept in sleeping or living areas, if possible, and have a non-allergic person change the litter frequently. The same goes for cleaning the cages of pet birds and hamsters.
4. If you are allergic to feathers, don't use feather pillows or down bedding. Even though the feathers are not coming from a live animal within your home, they can still trigger symptoms.
5. If you buy a new pet, consider a reptile or amphibian. Animals with scales or hairless skin like snakes and lizards do not usually trigger allergy symptoms.

For many people, total avoidance of pet dander may not be possible. So, you should consider allergy testing, immunotherapy and medications as needed or prescribed.

Living a life without limits may mean making some compromises in some areas, so that you can keep breathing well, staying active, healthy and allergy free. But, any steps you can take will be well worth it in the long run.

Featured Recipe - *Compliments of Syb*

Set Your Table for This Tasty Chicken Quinoa Soup (Gluten Free)

INGREDIENTS:

1/2 Organic Chicken (Skinless)
3 Carrots
4 Stalks Celery
1 Medium Onion
1 C. Green Beans
8 C. Water
1 T. Chopped Parsley
1 Small Clove Garlic
6 oz. Quinoa Grain/Pasta

PREPARATION:

Salt water to taste, cut and add chicken to the water and bring to a boil. (Hint: use dark meat for better flavor.) While the chicken boils, cut up all vegetables and add to broth. Then finely chop the parsley and garlic and add to soup. Cook soup until the carrots are very tender. Remove chicken, de-bone, and add back to the soup before serving.

While soup simmers, cook the Quinoa grain or Quinoa pasta as directed, and then drain. Add Quinoa to soup just before serving. **Bon Appetit!**



Allergy & Environmental Treatment Center provides quality care to individuals suffering from a variety of debilitating symptoms associated with food, environmental and chemical allergies.

We offer state-of-the-art allergy testing and treatment. Schedule your visit with us today! Call 480-634-2985.



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The **Paradise Valley Unified School District Health Expo** was held on Tuesday, May 4th at Paradise Valley High School.

Our own Bea Elmer, Licensed Clinical Technician was on hand to answer questions and provide educational materials to visitors.

It is our practice to participate in community health events whenever possible. A cross section of health care professionals were represented. Visitors included administration, support and students from the school district.

It was interesting to note how many people we talked with complained that their allergy symptoms were particularly troublesome this year. Not surprisingly, we are experiencing

one of the worst allergy seasons on record.

Allergy & Environmental Treatment Center provides quality care to individuals suffering from a variety of debilitating symptoms associated with food, environmental and chemical allergies.

We also offer general medicine/primary care services.

We offer state-of-the-art allergy testing and treatment. Schedule your visit with us today! Call 480-634-2985.

Sincerely,
Sharon Gwozdek, R.N., B.S.N.
Allergy & Environmental Treatment Center