

Like people, roaches need food and water and a place to live. Help keep your home roach free by storing food in sealable containers and keeping crumbs, dirty dishes and other sources of food waste cleaned up; fixing leaks and wiping up standing water; and cleaning up clutter where roaches find shelter.

If you still have a problem and you choose to use a pesticide, be sure to use it safely, and as directed on the label. Baits are less likely than sprays or foggers to harm your lungs.

● **Mold and Mildew**

When moisture in the air is high, mold and mildew can be a problem in bathrooms, kitchens and basements. Make sure these areas have good air circulation and are cleaned often. The basement in particular may need a fan or a dehumidifier. And remember – the water that collects in the dehumidifier must be emptied and the container cleaned often to prevent growing mildew.

Mold may grow on foam pillows when you perspire. Wash the pillow every week, dry thoroughly and make sure to change it every year. Or change to a fiber-filled pillow.

Molds also grow in the soil of houseplants, so check them often. You may have to keep all plants outdoors.

● **Dust Mites**

Dust mites are tiny, microscopic animals usually found in house dust. Several thousand mites can be found in a pinch of dust. Mites are one of the major triggers for people with allergies and asthma. They need the most work to remove.

Following these steps can help get rid of dust mites:

1. Put mattresses and pillows in allergen-proof covers. Tape over the length of the zipper.
2. Wash all bedding every week in water that is at least 130°F. Removing the bedspread at night may help.
3. Remove carpeting, especially in the bedroom. Dust mites thrive in it.
4. Dust and vacuum as often as possible. To reduce the amount of dust stirred up when cleaning, use a damp mop or damp cloth when you dust. Try to use a vacuum cleaner with a high efficiency filter or a central vacuum cleaner with a collection bag outside the home. Avoid cleaning when the person with asthma or allergies is around.
5. Use window shades or curtains made of plastic or other washable material for easy cleaning.
6. Remove stuffed furniture, stuffed animals (unless the animals can be washed) and clutter, especially in the bedroom.
7. Closets need extra care. They should hold only needed clothing. Putting clothes in a plastic garment bag may help. (Do not use the plastic bag that covers dry cleaning.)
8. Dust mites like moisture and high humidity. Cutting down the humidity in your home can cut down the number of mites. A dehumidifier may help.

● **Strong Odors or Fumes**

Perfume, room deodorizers, cleaning chemicals, paint and talcum powder are examples of triggers that must be avoided or kept to very low levels.

**You Can Make
A Difference
in Your Home**

Controlling the home environment is a very important part of asthma and allergy care. In addition to seeing a doctor regularly and taking medications as prescribed, the most important things that you can do to make a difference are:

1. Reduce or remove as many asthma and allergy triggers from your home as possible.
2. If possible, use high efficiency air filters and air-conditioners, and properly maintain them to keep your home cleaner and more comfortable.
3. Pay attention to the problem of dust mites. Work hard to control this problem, especially in the bedroom.
4. Contact the American Lung Association for more information. You can reach your local Lung Association by calling 1-800-LUNG-USA.

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Facts about...

**Home Control
of Allergies and
Asthma**



What's In The Air?

Your home is a busy place. People are always working, playing, cooking, washing, cleaning and moving things around. All that activity is perfectly normal, but it can release small particles and chemicals that build up in the air you breathe. Whether your home is large or small, old or new, the air inside may be causing breathing problems, especially for people with allergies and asthma.

But there are some simple things that you can do to clean up the air inside your home, so that everyone can breathe easier. This brochure will tell you how.

Asthma And Allergy "Triggers"

If you have allergies or asthma, you are sensitive to certain "triggers". These "triggers" can set off a reaction in your lungs and other parts of

your body. Triggers can be found indoors and outdoors. They can be simple things like:

- Cold air
- Tobacco smoke and wood smoke
- Perfume, paint, hair spray or any strong odors or fumes
- Allergens (things that cause allergies) such as dust mites, cockroaches, pollen, molds, animal dander – tiny scales or particles from hair, feathers or skin – and saliva from pets
- Illness, like colds and influenza

Other things may also trigger your asthma or allergies. It's important to learn which triggers are a problem for you. Then you can learn to avoid them to help keep yourself healthy.

Identifying your triggers isn't always easy. You can experiment with staying away from one suspected trigger at a time. Watch yourself to see if you get better. This may show you if that trigger was a problem for you. You can also ask your doctor to help. Your doctor may suggest keeping an asthma diary, or having a skin test for allergies.

The Air You Breathe

Sometimes the air outdoors can trigger allergies and asthma. You may have to avoid out-

door air pollution, pollen and mold spores. Controlling your contact with triggers outdoors is hard. Anytime air pollution and pollen levels are high, it's a good idea to stay indoors.

The air at home is easier for you to control. Some people with asthma and allergies notice that their symptoms get worse at night. Trigger controls in the bedroom or wherever you sleep are the best place to start. Air-conditioning can help. It allows you to keep windows and doors closed. This keeps pollen and mold spores outside. It also lowers indoor humidity. Low humidity helps to control mold and dust mites.

Avoid too much air-conditioning or too much heat. Room air temperature should be comfortable for someone with allergies or asthma. Some people can't tolerate a big change in temperature, particularly from warm to cold air.

There are air cleaning machines that you can buy that may remove some of the triggers in your home. But they will not remove them all. Some air cleaners use an electrical charge that makes ozone, which manufacturers claim will "purify" the air. But ozone can irritate the lungs, and is especially a problem for people with asthma. The American Lung Association does not recommend the use of air cleaners that produce ozone.

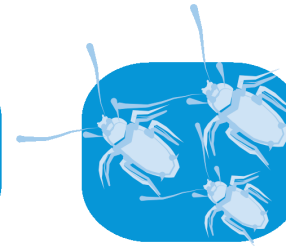
Look for mechanical air cleaners, such as HEPA air cleaners that don't produce ozone and can effectively trap large and small particles.

Asthma/Allergy Triggers

Asthma/Allergy triggers pictured here are just samples of where triggers may be found in the home.



Pets



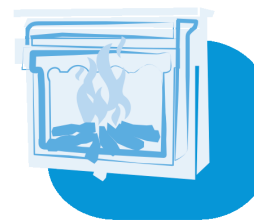
Cockroaches



Strong Odors or Fumes



Dust Mites



Wood Smoke



Tobacco Smoke



Hot or Cold Air



Indoor Molds

Removing Triggers From Your Home

Here are some common triggers and some ways to help control them at home.

• Tobacco Smoke

Smoking should not be allowed in the home. Ask family members and friends to smoke outdoors. Suggest that they quit smoking. Ask your Lung Association how you can help.

• Wood Smoke

Wood smoke is a problem for children and adults with asthma and allergies. Avoid wood stoves and replaces.

• Pets

Almost all pets can cause allergies, including dogs, cats and small animals like birds, hamsters and guinea pigs. All pets should be removed from the home if they trigger asthma and allergy symptoms. Pet allergen may stay in the home for months after the pet is gone because it remains in house dust. Allergy and asthma symptoms may take some time to get better.

If the pet stays in the home, keep it out of the bedroom of anyone with asthma or allergies. Weekly pet baths may help cut down the amount of pet saliva and dander in the home.

Sometimes you hear that certain cats or dogs are "non-allergenic." There is no such thing as a "non-allergenic" furry pet. Tropical fish or a reptile may be a good substitute.

• Cockroaches

Cockroaches can be a big problem for some people with asthma. Tiny pieces of dead roaches and roach droppings end up in house dust and the air you breathe.