

Advancements in Allergy and Asthma Care, Ltd.

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PET ALLERGIES

Household pets including cats, dogs, rodents, and birds can present special problems for people with allergies. Many people with cat allergies think they are allergic to the animal's fur. It is actually a protein within the pet's saliva and dander (skin flakes) that is the cause of their trouble. When cats groom themselves, they deposit saliva onto their fur and skin. Large amounts of dander become airborne when the animal rubs against furniture and when you brush or pet them. This substance is very difficult to remove from an environment.

Dander also contributes to another allergy problem. It serves as a food supply for dust mites. Although the fur of a dog or cat is not a major allergen, it will collect pollen, dust, mold and other irritants.

Someone with allergies or asthma should **not** keep a pet in their house. Although it is both physically and emotionally difficult, **finding the pet a new home, is the best solution!** Even isolating the pet to a small area or keeping the pet outdoors, does not guarantee a dander-free home. Air currents, from central heating and air conditioning or fans, will spread pet allergen throughout the house. Dander can also be brought back in on the body and clothing of other people.

1. Find the pet a new home!
2. If this is not possible, keep your pet outdoors.
3. **Never** allow the pet into the bedroom of the allergic individual!
Keep the pet out of the bedroom wing of the house.
4. Wash the pet every 2-4 weeks to reduce the amount of airborne dander.
5. Wash your hands after touching the pet.
6. A H.E.P.A. air purifier may be helpful in removing allergen particles.

