

# WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT MY ALLERGIES?

Allergens are the substances that cause you to experience allergy symptoms. Here are some ways to help limit your exposure to them inside and outside. By limiting your exposure, you may be able to reduce your symptoms and feel better. If you know the allergen that causes your allergy symptoms, you may take specific action against that allergen to minimize exposure.

myallergyguide

From the makers of ZYRTEC®



## When you're inside...

People with indoor allergies usually have symptoms all year long.

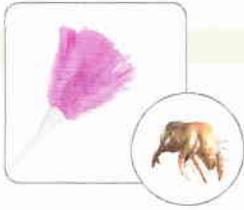
- 1 Filter your air.** HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Air) filters can be used in air conditioning systems and vacuums to trap small allergen particles.
- 2 Minimize dust mite matter.** Use hypoallergenic bedding with zippered dust-proof covers. Wash sheets and blankets in hot water each week.
- 3 Control pets.** Keep pets off of upholstered furniture and out of the bedrooms. Before getting a pet, ask your doctor.
- 4 Manage your child's exposure to allergens.** Wash "cuddle" toys weekly in hot water.
- 5 Prevent mold.** Since mold needs moisture to survive, try to keep your home dry. Places to guard against mold include basements, bathrooms, shower stalls, refrigerator drip trays, house plants, humidifiers, and garbage pails.
- 6 Control cockroaches.** Keep food covered and put pet food dishes away after pets are done eating. Wipe off hard surfaces with water, detergent, and 5% bleach (do not mix with other cleaners).

## When you're outside...

People with outdoor allergies tend to have symptoms at specific times during the year—such as during the spring or fall.

- 1 Find your comfort zone.** Know the limits of your outdoor allergen exposure and try to avoid overexposing yourself. Know the pollen count—pollen counts are available through a variety of sources and phone apps, including [zyrtec.com](http://zyrtec.com).
- 2 Keep outdoor allergens out.** On high pollen days, keep doors and windows closed. Shower and change your clothes after you've spent time outdoors. Driving with the windows closed may also help.
- 3 Be travel smart.** Schedule trips away when pollen levels are the highest where you live. Make sure pollen counts are low where you're going.
- 4 Stay off the grass.** If possible, exercise on asphalt or cement, at the beach, or at the gym to reduce contact with pollen and mold spores from grass and weeds.
- 5 Dry clothes inside.** Don't hang your clothing or linens outside to dry. Drying them inside helps avoid getting pollen and mold spores on your clean laundry.
- 6 Protect yourself.** Use a mask when cutting the lawn or raking leaves. Also, wear clothes that can protect you, like long pants and a long-sleeve shirt.

# COMMON INDOOR TRIGGERS



## ***Dust mites***

Even though you can't see them, dust mites live on linens and other materials in your house such as carpets, curtains, and furniture ("upholstered materials"). It's the dust mite droppings that trigger an allergic reaction.



## ***Pet dander***

Pet allergies are caused by a protein that is found in an animal's saliva, urine and blood. This protein can also be found on flakes from the animal's skin (called "dander"), and on the animal's fur after it cleans itself.



## ***Mold spores (indoor)***

Inhaling or touching mold can lead to immediate or delayed symptoms. Mold spores travel through the air and can grow indoors once they land on wet surfaces. Common places to guard against mold include basements, bathrooms, shower stalls, and refrigerator drip trays.

# COMMON OUTDOOR TRIGGERS



## ***Weed pollen***

All pollens are tiny particles carried by the wind, birds, and insects to pollinate plants. The most common weed pollens that cause allergies come from plain-looking plants that do not have showy flowers, such as ragweed and Russian thistle. Weed pollens are usually at their peak in the fall months.



## ***Tree pollen***

Tree pollens that cause the most allergies come from trees like elm, oak, sycamore, hickory, walnut, pecan, birch and cedar. Tree pollen levels are usually at their peak in the spring months.



## ***Grass pollen***

As with tree pollen, grass pollen is regional as well as seasonal. Grass pollen levels can be affected by temperature, time of day, and rain. The most common grasses that cause allergies include Bermuda grass, Kentucky bluegrass, and Timothy grass. Grass pollen levels are usually at their peak in the summer months.



## ***Mold spores (outdoor)***

These tiny airborne reproductive structures are released from mold and are so small that you may not even know you have inhaled them. Outside they can be found in heavy vegetation, hay and straw, grass, raked leaves, and soil.