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## House Dust Mite Allergy



## What Are House Dust Mites?

The house dust mite is a tiny mite (about a quarter of a millimetre long) that you cannot see without a microscope. It is commonly found in bedding, carpets, soft furnishings, and clothes. It is the most common allergen in indoor environments.

The mite grows best in warm and humid climates, feeding on skin flakes that we shed, as well as other debris.

## How Do Allergies To House Dust Mites Occur?

People are sensitive to the droppings (faeces) produced by these mites, which become airborne during movement. The mite allergen often triggers, or worsens, symptoms in people who suffer from eczema, asthma or allergic rhinitis.

## How Do I Reduce House Dust Mites?

Although it may not be possible to remove house dust mites completely from your living environment, reducing allergens level can significantly help to prevent constant exposure and make symptoms less severe.

### General Cleaning

- Use cleaning methods that does not stir up dust such as damp dusting and mopping. This should be carried out at least twice a week.
- Wear a mask while cleaning to prevent inhaling airborne allergens stirred up during movement.
- Use High-Efficiency Particulate (HEPA) filter vacuum cleaners and air filters.
- Surfaces such as tiles, wood, and linoleum are best as these do not hold dust mites and can be cleaned easily.

### Bedding

- Avoid pillows that are stuffed with natural materials such as down, feather, and kapok. Use synthetic material instead.
- Wash all bed linen such as bed sheets, pillowcases, and blankets weekly in hot water (at 60°C and above). Alternatively, use mite-proof mattresses and pillow covers.
- Remove stuffed toys as well as thick and heavy curtains in the bedroom that can easily trap dust.
- If possible, remove all carpeting from the bedroom.