3 Asthma-Friendly Cleaning Tips to Get Rid of Allergens

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Asthma-Friendly Cleaning Tips

It is no secret if you are an asthma sufferer that allergies and asthma often go hand-in-hand. Aggressively treating allergies can sometimes greatly reduce asthma symptoms. This includes cleaning your home, so we will talk about asthma-friendly cleaning tips that might help you breathe easier.

As both an allergy and asthma sufferer, I went through extensive allergy testing at the advice of my doctor, with the hope of also improving my asthma symptoms. The bonus was that once I found out what my allergies were, I could allergy-proof my home!

We don't have control of our environments, but we do have control of our homes. Finding out what types of allergies we have — and allergy-proofing our homes for these allergies — is a great step in managing allergic asthma.

Below you will find common household allergens that exacerbate asthma symptoms and asthma-friendly cleaning tips.

1. For Mold Allergies

Mold can be tricky because sometimes we don't know that it exists in the home. However, preventing mold from occurring is essential if you have a mold allergy.

Interestingly, a big source of mold in the home is household plants. Overwatering plants can cause mold to form on the plants and in the soil.

You may not notice it, which makes it hard to pinpoint. If you have household plants, do a little bit of research — find out how much your particular plants require and do not overwater them.

This may sound silly, but throw away moldy food and pay attention to expiration dates. Do not eat food past its expiration date if you have a mold allergy. Likewise, keep your refrigerator clean.

Bleach is your friend — use it. Bleach is cheap and a very effective cleaning agent against mold. Use it in areas that are known to cause mold growth, such as in the bathroom and in the kitchen and anywhere else that you suspect mold to be growing.

2. For Dust Allergies

A dust allergy is often more complicated than just being allergic to dust. If you are told that you are allergic to dust, it is obvious that you should do your best to keep dust at bay in your home — this can be achieved by dusting the wooden surfaces of your home and keeping the floors free of dust.

However, a dust allergy also includes dust mites, which is an actual living creature that is microscopic — it is one-quarter to one-third of a millimeter in size.

Dust mites thrive in warm, humid temperatures, such is in our homes, and they feed on our skin cells that are shed on a daily basis. Dust mites are found in a variety of places in the home: carpeting, furniture, beds and toys.

Dusting is not enough to get rid of dust mites. Here are several ways to rid your home of pesky dust mites:

- Wash sheets weekly in hot water.
- Purchase covers for mattresses and pillows that are meant to protect from dust.
- If possible, rid the home of things that can harbor dust mites, such as carpets and curtains — hardwood floors and blinds can be cleaned for dust much easier.
- Utilize air filters, which can prevent mites from getting into the air.

It is not possible to rid the home entirely of dust mites, but following these guideline can greatly reduce the amount of dust mites in the home.

3. For Animal Allergies

The ideal situation for the allergy and asthma sufferer who has an allergy to animals would be to remove the animal from the home. As an allergy and asthma sufferer who has a slight dog allergy and who wouldn't dream of getting rid of my two dogs, I am here to tell you that although it isn't perfect, there are ways to manage.

First of all, if you have a true cat or dog allergy, you must realize that there is no hypoallergenic pet. There is a lot of talk about hypoallergenic pets as the cure-all for pet allergies, but according to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, proteins in the pet's urine, saliva or dander can still affect allergy sufferers.

Now that we have that cleared up, the best thing to do is to keep your pet out of your bedroom. Your bedroom should be a pet-free room, with the door kept closed. Consider purchasing an air cleaner for your room, as well.

Here are some other strategies for keeping your home clear of pet dander:

- If possible, remove carpeting from the house, opting for hardwood or tiled floors.
- If carpeting is necessary, keep the carpets as free of fur as possible by vacuuming frequently.
- Consider vacuuming with a facemask and purchase a HEPA filter for the vacuum.
- Change clothes after contact with animals.
- Have a family member without pet dander allergies wash and brush the pet weekly to reduce the dander.
- Consider taking medications, such as antihistamines, or immunotherapy to reduce symptoms.