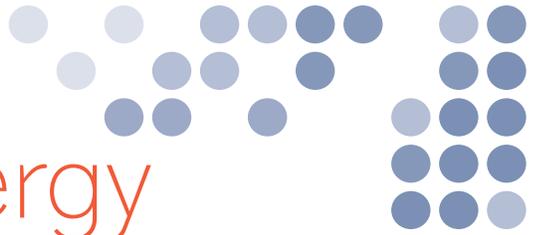


Patient Information: House Dust Mite Allergy



Allergy to house dust mite is a problem that affects millions of people all over the world.

Unlike pollen allergies, house dust mite allergy can affect all year, causing symptoms like rhinoconjunctivitis, asthma, and dermatitis. Studies indicate that nearly 1 in 3 people may be allergic to dust mites.



The Cause

Tiny 8-legged creatures called dust mites seem to be the major cause of allergic reactions in house dust. House dust mites survive on shed human skin scales. As these mites digest their food, they produce potent allergens which are released in their fecal pellets (droppings). Inhaling these microscopic pellets and mite bodies themselves provokes allergic symptoms such as nasal congestion, itching, watery eyes, sneezing and asthma.

Where Dust Mites Live

Because house dust mites feed on shed human skin scales, mattresses and pillows are ideal places for mite infestations and have the highest levels of mite allergens. House dust mites thrive in warm, humid environments. They prefer temperatures at or above 70 degrees. Wall-to-wall carpeting, central heating, bedding, upholstered furniture, wallpaper or even stuffed toys provide ideal conditions for dust mites. Although mattresses and bed covers at home are the major source of mite allergens, mite-allergic patients are also exposed to significant mite allergens in public places such as schools, movie theaters and public transportation.



Treatment

While avoidance measures should always be the first line of treatment, new studies point toward a combination of avoidance measures with mite-specific Immunotherapy (IT)

Avoidance

The key to reducing symptoms is the careful cleaning of all rooms where you spend most of your time. Since most people spend about a third of their lives in the bedroom, that is a good place to start. Here are some simple steps you should take.

- Since mites can grow abundantly in your bed, the single most important thing you can do is enclose your mattresses, box springs and pillows in vinyl or synthetic coverings.
- Change your bed linens and pillow cases frequently
- Use washable blankets and bed spreads
- Eliminate upholstered furniture, carpeting and drapes
- Wet-mop and vacuum frequently
- Remove stuffed toys
- Use air filtration devices
- Keep the humidity as low as possible (35-50%)
- Use chemical agents to kill house dust mites and remove allergens.

What is Allergy Immunotherapy (IT)?

Allergy Immunotherapy (allergy shots) is a clinically documented treatment that considerably reduces or completely removes your allergy symptoms and the need for traditional, symptom-relieving medication. After three to six months, your need for drugs may decrease and your symptoms may become less severe. An additional affect of allergy shots is that it may prevent the onset of other allergies and the development of asthma. Also, the treatment has a long-standing effect after it is discontinued. New scientific studies have shown that results are maintained for 5 to 10 years after the course of allergy shots has been completed. Among the wide variety of treatment possibilities available today, allergy Immunotherapy is the only treatment that targets the cause of allergy and alters the natural course of the disease, which for many patients may lead to an improved quality of life. IT is not without risks. Possible side effects may include: itching and redness at the site of injection, local swelling and soreness 8-12 hours after injection. Although these local reactions may produce discomfort, they are not serious. Serious systemic reactions can occur, but they are rare.

Learn More about IT

Consult an Allergy Specialist. If you experience allergic symptoms, it is important to talk to a doctor who specializes in the diagnosis and treatment of allergic diseases. Based on your history and specific testing, your Allergy Specialist will be able to determine if you are a candidate for IT.



Warnings and Indications for Allergy Immunotherapy (IT)

Hyposensitization therapy is a treatment for patients exhibiting allergic reactions to seasonal pollens, dust mites, animal danders and various other inhalants in situations where the offending allergen cannot be avoided. Prior to initiation of therapy, the clinical sensitivity should be established by careful evaluation of the patient's history confirmed by diagnostic skin testing. Hyposensitization should not be prescribed for sensitivities to allergens which can easily be avoided. As with all allergenic extracts, severe system reactions may occur. In certain individuals, these life-threatening reactions may be fatal.

Visit www.alk-abello.com/us for full prescribing information and speak with your doctor.



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