



ASTHMA TRIGGER CONTROL PLAN

Asthma triggers are things that can cause asthma symptoms or make asthma worse. You can help prevent asthma flare-ups by avoiding asthma triggers. Everyone's triggers are different. Work with your doctor to identify your asthma triggers and ways to control them. Controlling your asthma triggers, means you can reduce the chance of an asthma flare-up and may decrease the need for more medicines.

ASTHMA TRIGGERS



Tobacco Smoke

All people with asthma are sensitive to tobacco smoke. If you can smell tobacco smoke, even if you can't see the person smoking, you are breathing in chemicals that can make you sick!

- If you smoke, ask your doctor for ways to help you quit. Ask family members to quit smoking, too.
- Do not allow smoking in your house or in your car.
- Keep away from smoke-filled areas.



Dust mites

Anywhere you see dust, you will find dust mites. Dust mites are tiny creatures you can't see. They're found in bedding, pillows, carpets, curtains and furniture fabrics. Dust mites are small enough that you can breathe them (and their droppings) into your lungs where they can cause swelling and asthma flare-ups. Things that will help the most:

- Cover pillows, mattress, and box spring in a special dust-proof cover.
- Wash all bedding weekly in hot water (130°F).



Other things that can help

- Damp dust regularly.
- Try not to sleep or lie on cloth-covered cushions or furniture.
- Remove carpets, especially in the bedroom.
- Keep stuffed toys out of the bed or wash them in hot water weekly (130°F).
- Reduce indoor humidity to less than 50 percent.



N. Schimel

Animal dander

All pets with fur or feathers can make dander. Dander is dried saliva (mixed with animal skin and droppings) that gets breathed into the lungs where it can cause swelling and asthma flare-ups.

The best thing to do:

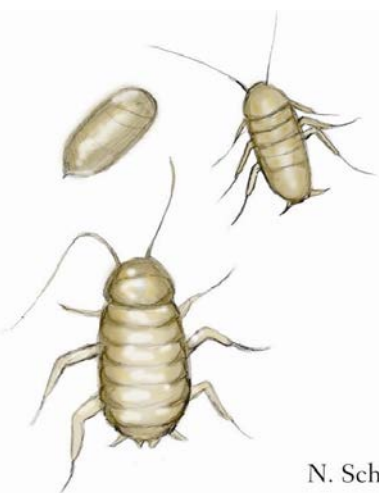
- Keep furry or feathered pets out of your home.



K. McDonnell

If you can't keep the pet outdoors, then:

- Keep the pet out of the bedroom of the person with asthma and keep the door closed.
- Cover the air vents in the bedroom of the person who has asthma with a filter or cheesecloth.
- Remove carpets.
- Keep pets off carpets and cloth covered furniture.
- Damp dust regularly.



N. Schimel

Cockroaches

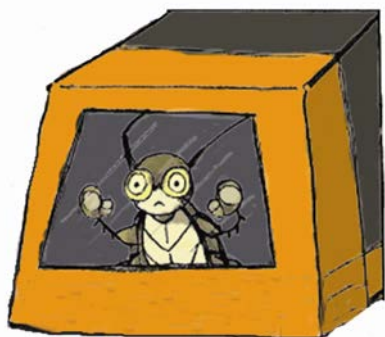
Cockroaches leave droppings wherever they go and then die. The dead bodies and droppings start to decompose and tiny pieces mix in with house dust. When you breathe in house dust with the cockroach parts, proteins in cockroach parts can cause swelling and asthma flare-ups.

Things that help the most:

- Seal entry ways.
- Keep food in closed containers.
- Fix leaky faucets and pipes.

If the above doesn't work, try the following:

- Remove garbage to outside trash containers daily.
- Keep all food out of bedrooms.
- Use poison baits, traps, powders, gels, or paste (for example, boric acid). If a spray is used to kill roaches, stay out of the room until the odor goes away.
- Damp dust regularly.



K. McDonnell

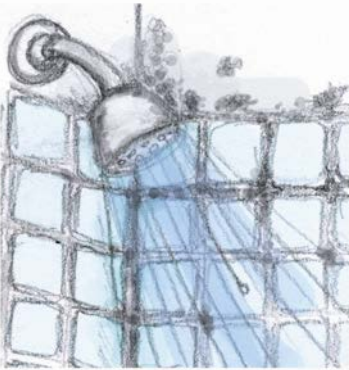


M. Tsutsumi

Rodents

Rodents produce dander, similar to pet dander, which is small enough to be inhaled. Protein in the dander causes swelling, which can lead to asthma flare-ups. You should:

- Repair any holes, cracks or spaces where rodents may enter your house.
- Keep food in closed containers.
- Keep food out of bedrooms.
- Use mechanical or sticky traps.
- Damp dust regularly.



N. Schimel

Indoor mold

Mold can grow inside where surfaces are moist and lights are low, in places like bathrooms, basements, under sinks and in potted plants.

- Fix leaky faucets, pipes or other sources of water.
- Clean moldy surfaces with a cleaner that has bleach in it. You can use a mix of half bleach and half water. See Clean “Green” handout for more recipes.
- Reduce indoor humidity to less than 50 percent.



R. Siahaan

Pollen and outdoor mold

Pollens are seasonal; spring begins with tree pollen, summer brings grass pollens, and fall brings both ragweed, pollen and molds. Especially during your pollen season:

- Try to keep windows closed, especially around midday.
- Stay indoors when counts are high.
- Ask your doctor whether you need to add or increase your medicine before the allergy season starts.
- Use a clothes dryer; clothes dried outside on a clothesline will have many pollens stuck to them.



M. Tsutsumi

Smoke, strong odors and sprays

Strong smells from campfires, perfumes, colognes, deodorants, cleaning supplies, paints and many others can worsen asthma.

- Resist heating your home with a wood burning stove, fireplace or gas stove.
- Keep away from strong odors and sprays such as perfume, talcum powder, hair spray and paints.
- Open windows when using cleaning products, and stay out of the room for two hours.



Exercise, sports, work or play

Exercise is important for a healthy respiratory system. Everyone with asthma should be able to exercise without being held back by asthma symptoms.

- See your doctor if you have asthma symptoms when you are active – like when you exercise, play sports or work hard.
- Ask your doctor about taking medicine before exercising to control and prevent symptoms.
- Warm up slowly for 6 to 10 minutes before exercising.
- Avoid exercising outside when the air pollution or pollen levels are high.



N. Schimel

Colds and flu

Colds can make asthma worse and asthma can make colds worse. Break the cycle:

- Everyone with asthma should get a flu shot every year.
- Wash your hands frequently.
- Don't wonder if the symptoms are for a cold or for asthma; take asthma medication first, then follow with any cold remedies.



Air pollution

Air pollution is caused by exhaust from vehicles, smoke from chimneys and power plants, and anything that burns, including campfires, outdoor wood burners, leaf piles and even cigarettes.

- Avoid exercising outside on high air pollution days.
- Stay inside. Seek air-conditioned places.
- Check air quality and pollen counts at www.epa.gov/airnow or call 1-866-DAILY-AIR (1-866-324-5924)



N. Schimel

Other things that can make asthma worse

- Sulfites in foods. Do not drink beer or wine or eat shrimp, dried fruit, or canned potatoes if they cause asthma symptoms.
- Cold air. Cover nose and mouth with a scarf on cold or windy days.
- Other medicines. Tell your doctor about all the medicines you are taking, including cold medicines, aspirin, eye drops, vitamins and herbs.