

## How to Live With Pet Allergies

Many people enjoy sharing their homes and lives with pets, even those who are allergic to animals. Unfortunately, often people believe or are told that once they are diagnosed with a pet allergy, they have no option but to remove their pet from their family.

Thankfully, there are many solutions that can be explored that would allow you to keep your beloved pet while successfully managing your allergies. You can have a happy healthy life with your pets, even if you are allergic to them!



### Understanding your allergies

It is important to visit your doctor to determine what allergies you actually have. You may find that you're allergic to something else and not your pet at all! Often people with allergies can also react to more than one allergen such as dust, mold, mites and pollen. Your doctor can discuss allergy testing and arrange a visit with a doctor that specializes in allergies.

### Reduce the allergens and your symptoms

If you are allergic to your pet and your reactions aren't life threatening, try these steps to reduce your symptoms:

#### Create an "allergy free" zone in your home

This would ideally be the allergic person's bedroom where the animal is strictly not allowed to access.

#### Adjust the environment

Use HEPA air cleaners throughout the home and ensure to replace the filters as directed. Avoid dander/dust gathering furnishing such as cloth curtains, carpeted floors etc. Wash human and animal bedding and vacuum all surfaces often. Use impermeable covers for the mattress and bedding.

- Tip: check your work benefits to see if there maybe coverage to purchase some of these items such as the air filter



**Wipe down, brush and/or bath your pet on a weekly basis**

This can reduce the amount of dander in the haircoat that can cause a reaction. Ensure to use a safe vet approved bath product only, especially for cats!

**Consider feeding your cat a different diet**

Purina has developed a new cat food called [\*Proplan LiveClear Allergen Reducing\*](#). When cats are fed this diet, it reduces allergens in cat hair and dander by close to 50% within 3 weeks. This diet can currently be purchased in the US but will hopefully be released in Canada soon!

**Try treatments**

Speak to your doctor about allergy treatment options, which may include antihistamine and steroid nasal sprays, eye drops, and pills. Allergy shots may also help. It is important to find an allergist who understands your commitment to your pet while also managing your allergies. Washing your hands and showering can also help to remove allergens from your skin.

It can take time for the above changes to have an effect and owners need to continue with the upkeep, but the extra effort is worth it in the end! Usually, a combination of above approaches is more likely to succeed in allowing a person with allergies to live happily with their pets.

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**References:**

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