

Let's talk about...

House dust
mite allergy



 **ALK**

Allergy solutions for life

House dust mite allergy – what is it?

If you wake up each morning with cold-like symptoms, it may be that you have a house dust mite allergy. That means you're allergic to the waste dust mites produce – which can be up to 200 times their body weight.

Tiny creature – a mite-y big problem

House dust mites are so tiny they're invisible to the naked eye. But allergy to house dust mites is very common and can trigger allergic reactions such as:¹

- rhinitis (symptoms of blocked or runny nose, itching, sneezing)
- asthma
- eczema



What happens when you get a house dust mite allergy?

Not everyone reacts to dust mites in the same way, but the symptoms can be similar to hay fever and affect your sleep quality.

Symptoms include:

- Blocked or runny nose
- Itchy throat
- Itchy eyes
- Flaring of eczema
- Wheezing

Where do house dust mites live?

House dust mites live in carpets, soft furniture, bedding – and even stuffed toys. They feed on the tiny flakes of skin that we shed each day.¹

Did you know?



House dust mites don't live on people, and they don't bite



Mites thrive in warm humid environments



House dust mites are found in every home



The commonest allergic trigger for perennial (lasting throughout the year) allergic rhinitis is the house dust mite

How is a house dust mite allergy diagnosed?

Your GP will usually diagnose a house dust mite allergy by talking to you about your symptoms. They may also carry out a pinprick allergy test. Medication such as antihistamine tablets or nasal sprays can help.



If you're worried about your symptoms, talk to your GP, practice nurse or pharmacist. There is a range of treatments that can help.

House dust mites thrive in warm, humid temperatures



Bust the dust – how to reduce the house dust mite population



Replace carpets with hard floors, especially in the bedroom



Vacuum rugs, carpets and hard wood floors regularly



Fit zippered dust-proof covers on your mattress, pillows and duvets



Use hypoallergenic bedding



Keep the air clean with high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters



Wear filtering masks when you clean the house



Keep the temperature and humidity in your home as low as possible



Use a dehumidifier to keep humidity levels below 50%



Wash bedding at 60 degrees weekly



Put stuffed toys in the freezer for 24 hours to kill dust mites



Damp dust all surfaces weekly



What should I do if my symptoms don't improve?

If your symptoms make it difficult to carry on with your usual daily life, your GP may refer you to a specialist allergy service for further tests. They'll be able to make an accurate diagnosis and advise on additional treatments based on your history and blood tests.

References

1. Allergy UK, House Dust Mite. Available at https://www.allergyuk.org/assets/000/001/243/House_Dust_Mite_original.pdf (Accessed May 2021)

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