

Environmental Allergy Triggers

Some of the most serious health problems for children may start at home. Some of the following information may be helpful in reducing environmental triggers for your child.

Here are some basic things that you can do to help decrease the amount of allergens in your house.

- Sleep with the windows closed at night. The pollen count is highest as the sun is coming up.
- Take your shoes off at the door.
- Vacuum and damp dust frequently. If at all possible, have hard wood floors with few carpets.
- Keep stuffed animals out of your child's bedroom.
- Use a HEPA air filter.
- NO smoking in the house.
- Avoid any strong odors – perfumes, deodorants, cleaning agents. If you need to use strong chemicals to clean or paint, have your child stay somewhere else while work is being done.
- Household plants can be a source of mold. Do not have them in your child's bedroom. Limit the number allowed in the house.
- Be aware of mold. Any place where water has leaked in the house, there is a potential for mold growth.
- Check the basement, closets, and attic for any signs of mold. If you do detect a problem, seek help to get it thoroughly cleaned up.
- If your child is allergic to animals, keep them out of the house. If not possible, keep the animal out of the child's bedroom. Wipe the animal down with a damp cloth when the animal enters the house.
- Place your child's mattress in a plastic case with a zipper. These can be purchased at any home store. Also have your child sleep on a man-made pillow. Avoid feather pillows and down blankets.
- Wash bedding in hot water on a weekly basis.

Common allergy symptoms include watery eyes, sneezing, itching, coughing, and a runny or stuffy nose. Allergies can be treated, so it is important to talk to your doctor about these symptoms and identify what may be causing the symptoms.