

Understanding Dust Mite Allergies

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The Basic Facts on Dust Mites

Dust mites are eight-legged arachnids and are relatives to spiders and ticks. Dust mites are microscopic so, unlike bed bugs, they cannot be seen by the naked eye. A female dust mite can lay 25-to-50 eggs every 3 weeks, resulting in dust mite populations of up to 1 million inhabiting a single bed!

Q: Where do dust mites live?

A: Dust mites are found in nearly all homes, even in the cleanest ones. Dust mites thrive in dark, warm and humid environments and are typically found in:

- * Pillows
- * Comforters
- * Carpets
- * Mattresses
- * Blankets
- * Upholstered Furniture

Q: What is the difference between dust and dust mites?

A: Dust is made up of many different particles, a variety of which can cause allergies. The dust mite is much smaller and can leave behind more than 100,000 of its waste particles in a gram of dust, making it a main cause of allergy symptoms.

Q: Am I allergic to dust mite itself?

A: Allergies are not caused by dust mites themselves, but rather by a combination of their waste particles and dead body fragments. These particles are called dust mite allergens, and most allergic people react to them. Unfortunately, although a dust mite may live for only 2-3 months, dust mite allergen particles continue to cause allergy symptoms even after the mite that produced them has died.

Q: What is the difference between dust mites and bed bugs?

A: Both dust mites and bed bugs can find an ideal living environment in your bed. However, dust mites feed off our shed skin cells while bed bugs bite us directly in order to feed off our blood. Dust mites cause inhalant allergy symptoms and bed bugs do not.

Q: What can I do to reduce dust mite allergens?

A: Follow our 6 step for allergen avoidance, which are particularly helpful for people with dust mite allergies. Remember to specifically:

- Focus on the bed by covering bedding in allergy encasing and washing linens regularly.
- Remove carpet in favor of wood or tile or treat carpet to denature allergens.
- Use a HEPA filtration vacuum that captures allergens
- Avoid upholstered furniture and curtains where allergens can build up. Choose wipeable furniture like leather and window blinds instead.
- Use a dehumidifier and air conditioner to keep humidity low and discourage dust mite growth
- Clean with a facemask

