

Ten Ways to Alleviate Asthma and Allergies in the Home

Submitted by: Sharp Electronics (UK)

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4th May 2004 World Asthma Day

17th - 21st May 2004 National Allergy Week

Ten Ways to Alleviate Asthma and Allergies in the Home:

According to the National Asthma Campaign over 5.1 million people in the UK have asthma, including one in eight children and one in thirteen adults. The condition occurs when the small tubes carrying air into and out of the lungs become sensitive and inflamed, causing wheezing, breathlessness and coughing. Allergic reactions are also on the increase, and can be equally devastating, particularly where people develop sensitivity to a wide range of substances encountered in everyday life.

Although the home is seen as a place of refuge, it can actually exacerbate both conditions. Many of the potential triggers are invisible to the naked eye, such as dust mites, pollen and particles attached to animal fur which may all be culprits, however by following the simple, easy-to-apply steps below it is possible to reduce allergen levels in the home.

1. Replace curtains with blinds, and carpets with hard floors, to prevent dust gathering.
2. Purchase leather or vinyl covered sofas and chairs rather than those with fabric coverings to prevent dust mites colonising the furniture.
3. Use cotton throws to cover soft furnishings as these can be washed regularly. Cushion covers, bedding, pillows and duvets should either be washed at 60oC or dry cleaned regularly to destroy any resident dust mites. Cover all bedding with anti-mite covers.
4. Choose simple furnishings and décor which will not allow dust to accumulate, for example choose a bed without a headboard, avoid drapes and fussy lampshades which are difficult to keep clean. Remove cornices which can provide a ledge for the build up of dust.
5. Damp dust all surfaces regularly to remove all traces of dust.
6. Vacuum frequently to remove dust and pollen, ensuring all dust, even from corners, is collected.
7. Maintain an atmosphere of low humidity in the home, ensuring the air is dry, as dust mites thrive in warm, moist conditions. Dry clothes outside as much as possible and use an extractor fan in the bathroom after baths and showers.
8. Open windows daily to bring in cool, fresh air.
9. Invest in an air purifier such as the Sharp FU-40SEK, which incorporates Sharp's exclusive Plasmacluster Ion™ technology to deactivate the airborne micro-particles from dust mites, mould spores and animal fur, which can trigger an asthmatic response. The air purifier discharges positive and

negative ions into the atmosphere, which cluster around these micro-particles, rendering them inactive, thus eliminating their allergy triggering effects. For more information on Sharp's range of air purifiers visit www.sharp.co.uk or contact the Customer Helpline Number: 0800 915 3015.

10. Brush pets outside regularly to reduce the amount of animal hair in the home. This can also remove pollen during the flowering season to prevent it entering the home which can be useful if any of the family also suffers from hayfever.

PRESS CONTACT

Lucy Bradwell, Sharp Press Office

Tel: 0161 204 2655 E.mail: lucy.bradwell@sharp-uk.co.uk