



How can your child avoid triggers?

It may be impossible to completely rid your home of all allergens or irritants, but there are reasonable things that you can do to reduce your child's exposure to triggers. Avoidance of triggers can help you reduce your child's need for asthma medication.

- **Eliminate smoke exposure.** Don't let your child be exposed to smoke in your home or car
- **Reduce dust mite exposure.** If your child is allergic to dust mites, then covering your child's mattress and pillows with dust mite-proof covers and washing bedding weekly can significantly reduce exposure. Vacuuming and dusting often is also recommended. Removing carpeting and stuffed animals from the bedroom can also help reduce exposure. Wash stuffed toys weekly in hot water with detergent and bleach to kill the dust mites
- **Reduce exposure to pet allergens.** If your child is allergic to certain pets, they should be removed from the home if at all possible. The next best possibility would be to keep the pet out of your child's bedroom and keep the door closed. A high - efficiency particular air filter (HEPA) in the bedroom or on the furnace might also help reduce pet allergen levels. Neither of these are as effective as removing the pet from the home.
- Control cockroaches and mice - keep food and garbage in closed containers. Avoid leaving food, dirty dishes or standing water out.
- **Prevent mold.** Mold is generally due to excessive moisture indoors, which can result from water damage by flooding, leaky roofs, leaky pipes, or excessive humidity. Repair any source of water leakage. Indoor humidity can be reduced with exhaust fans or a dehumidifier. Existing mold must be cleaned with detergent and water, but if the mold has invaded into the wallboard, some areas may need to be replaced to completely control asthma symptoms from mold.
- **Reduce pollen exposure if your child is allergic.** Avoiding open windows during high pollen season and using the air conditioner instead can help.
- Reduce indoor irritants: use unscented cleaning products and avoid mothballs, room deodorizers, and scented candles.

- **Check air quality reports.** When the air quality is very poor, it is best to keep your asthma child indoors as much as possible. If your child goes outside, have your child change his or her clothes after coming inside. Put dirty clothes in a covered hamper to avoid spreading allergens inside your home.