

What is Cockroach allergy?

*A simple guide on preventing
allergy caused by this common
household insect*



Cockroaches are eight-legged insects commonly found in *dark, humid and warm* places in our homes such as the kitchen and bathroom. They eat almost everything, but can also live for weeks without food and water.

In the Philippines, there are 2 cockroach species that cause cockroach allergy, namely:



American cockroach
(*Periplaneta americana*)



German cockroach
(*Blattella germanica*)



Q: How can cockroaches cause an allergic reaction?

Enzymes found in the saliva, feces, secretions, shedded body parts and dead bodies of cockroaches act as allergens that incite an allergic reaction from our immune system.



Q: What are the symptoms of cockroach allergy?

A: Cockroach allergy may range from *mild to severe*. A mild allergy may cause *runny nose, watery eyes and sneezing*, while a severe allergy may result in *eczema flare-up or a severe asthmatic attack*.



Q: What treatments help with cockroach allergy?

A: The most effective treatment for cockroach allergy is prevention by removing the cause. However, over-the-counter medications such as antihistamines, decongestants and nasal sprays, or your usual asthma medications may help you find relief. If these medications don't help, or your symptoms are worsening, visit your doctor immediately.



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Q: Is there a long-term treatment for cockroach allergy symptoms?

A: Yes. This can be done through allergen immunotherapy also called "allergy shots" wherein cockroach allergens are repeatedly administered in gradually increasing doses until one's sensitivity to that allergen is decreased.

This overall decreased sensitivity provides lasting relief and protection against cockroach allergy symptoms.

Types of allergen immunotherapy



Sublingual immunotherapy (SLIT)



Subcutaneous immunotherapy (SCIT)



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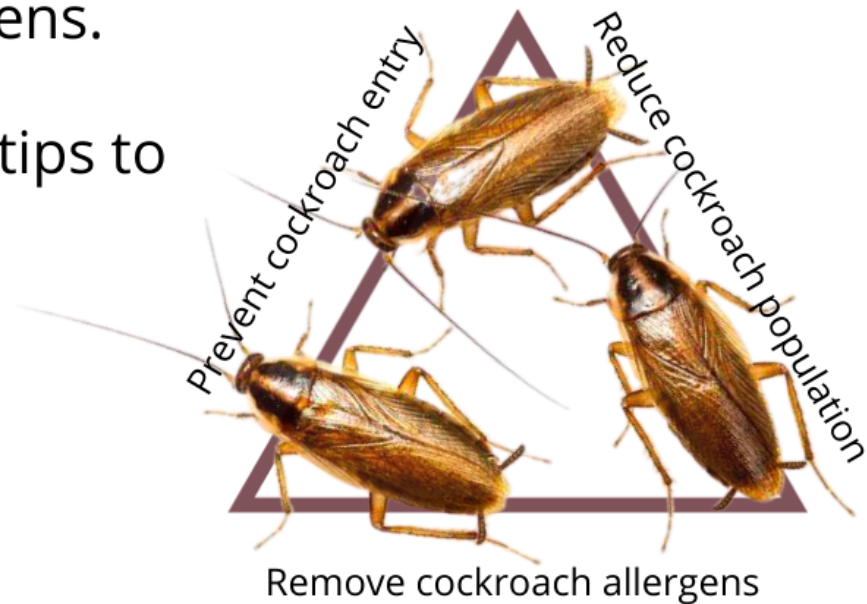


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Q: How can you prevent cockroach allergy?

A: To eliminate cockroaches in your homes means to prevent cockroach allergy. To do this, 3 things need to be done: 1) prevent cockroach entry, 2) reduce cockroach population, and 3) remove cockroach allergens.

Here are simple tips to do this:



COCKROACH ALLERGY PREVENTION



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Prevent cockroach entry into your homes



Inspect hiding places and travel routes. Look for clues!

- body parts
- feces (black specks the size of sand grains)
- regurgitated digestive juice (brown stains on the edge of cabinets or inside drawers)

Seal cracks and other portals of entry



Reduce cockroach population by taking away their food and water source and by killing them



Look for food & water sources

- grease, cooking debris
- trash cans
- pet food
- open snack food containers

Eliminate these sources

- Remove grease and food debris
- Dispose garbage regularly
- Store food in airtight containers or in the refrigerator

Use as targets for baiting and insecticide spraying

- Use baits instead of pesticides
- Monitor infestation regularly by using stick traps
- Repeat bait placement every 1-2 weeks



START



Bait strategically placed in hiding places & travel routes

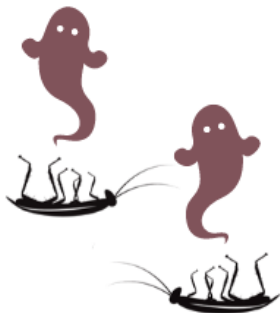


Cockroaches feed on bait and return to their nest



Intoxicated cockroaches die

HOW DO COCKROACH BAIT WORK?



Entire cockroach population will eventually die



Non-exposed cockroaches indirectly ingest bait in regurgitated food & feces of exposed cockroaches



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Remove cockroach allergens by maintaining cleanliness



Scrub hard surfaces in the kitchen and the rest of the house thoroughly to remove allergen in sticky secretions



Use detergent or a bleach solution



Image citation

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