

What is pet allergy?

*Know how pets can cause
allergies & learn how to
live harmoniously with
them*



Pet allergy is an allergic reaction to household animals, more commonly cats and dogs. Allergens mainly come from oil gland secretions that get spread on their skin and fur. Other allergens come from their saliva, dander and feces.



Fel d 1 and Can f 1 are the major cat and dog allergens, respectively, These are proteins produced by their sebaceous glands.



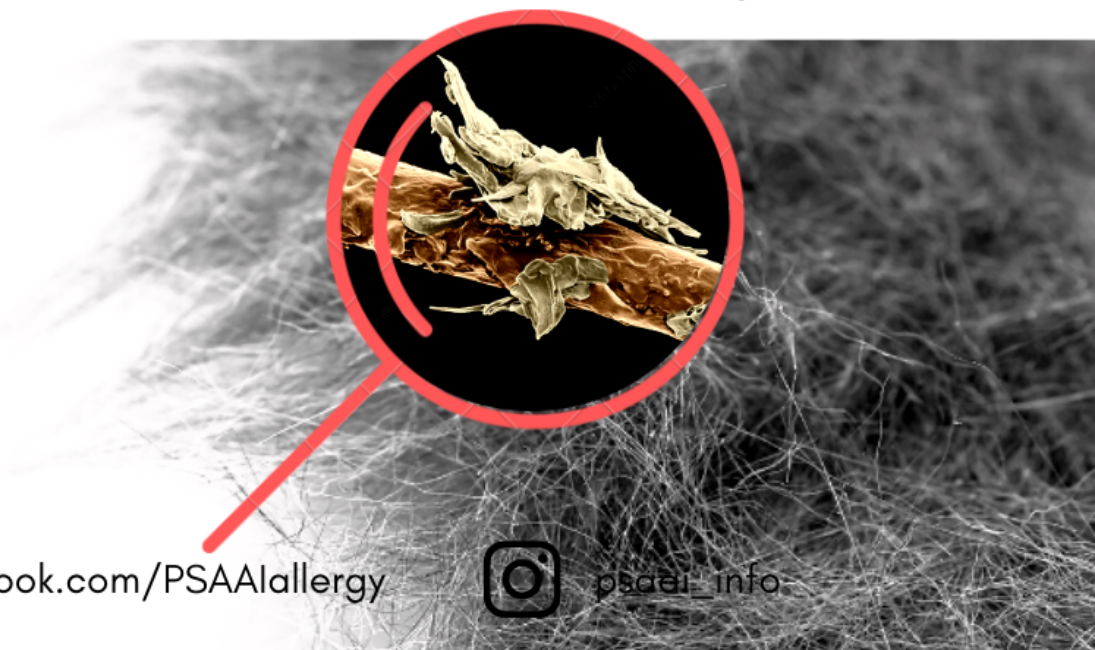
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Q: How do pet allergens spread?

Cat and dog allergens are so tiny that they can get *aerosolized and easily spread by air*. Since these allergens are very sticky, they also *adhere to your clothes, skin and hair*, and you can carry them to places. This is why they can be found in environments such as hospitals and airplanes where you don't expect to find them or where these animals are not even present.



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Q: Is there such a thing as hypoallergenic cats or dogs?

Cats and dogs, no matter what breed, produce proteins that cause allergies. This makes it impossible for there to be a completely non-allergenic or hypoallergenic cat or dog.



Q: Can you be allergic to cats and not dogs?

Yes, it is possible to be allergic to cats and not dogs, and vice versa. The amount of allergens, and not necessarily the animal source has more impact on your allergy and its severity. This is due to the fact that cat and dog allergens are very similar proteins. However, since cats spend more time grooming by repeated licking and thereby spreading allergens over its body — cats appear to be more allergy-causing than dogs.



Q: What are the symptoms of pet allergy?

A: Pet 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*.

oopsie!



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Q: What treatments help with pet allergy?

A: 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.



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

A: Yes. This can be done through allergen immunotherapy also called "allergy shots" wherein dog and/or cat 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 pet allergy symptoms.

Types of allergen immunotherapy



Sublingual immunotherapy (SLIT)



Subcutaneous immunotherapy (SCIT)



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Q: Can you live with pets and a pet allergy?

A: It may be possible to live with pets and pet allergies, depending on your level of sensitivity and the amount of allergens that your pet produces. To make living with your pets possible, you have to effectively 1) *keep allergen levels down*, and 2) *reduce exposure to pets*.

Here's how:

Keep allergen
levels down



Reduce exposure
to pets

LIVING WITH PETS & PET ALLERGY



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Keep pet allergen levels down



Vacuum and dust frequently while wearing a mask



Wash pets once to twice weekly



Run a HEPA filtered air cleaner that is the right size for the room



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Reduce exposure to pets and pet allergens



Exclude cats & dogs from rooms in which reduced exposure is desired



Change clothes when traveling from a high to a low animal allergen environment to reduce exposure of other people



Use woven microfiber bed encasings to block allergen penetration



Image citation

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