Cat Allergy

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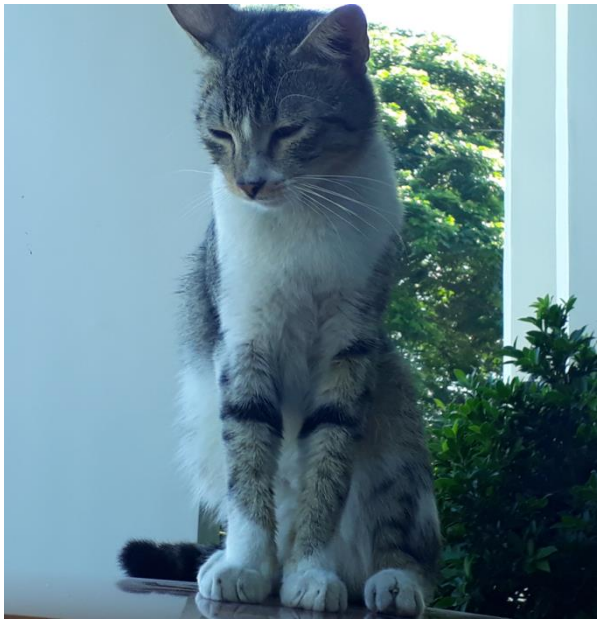
Scientific name*: Felis domesticus*

Description:



Cats are small, furry domesticated carnivorous mammals chosen as pets and for its skill to hunt rodents. Allergy to cats is the most common mammalian-origin allergy in humans affecting 1 in 5 adults worldwide.[1,2] The allergens they produce are present throughout indoor environment of houses, buildings, or workplaces.[3]

The major cat allergens are Fel d 1, a secretoglobulin and not a lipocalin, and Fel d 4.[4,5] The sources of allergens are salivary, sebaceous and perianal glands.[4] Cat's allergen is lighter than dog's allergen. Cat's allergen is among the tiniest and stickiest allergen molecules enabling it to be transferred to environment with no exposure to cat, measuring roughly one-tenth the size of a dust allergen. Sixty percent (60%) of airborne Fel d 1 is carried by small particles, of which 75% are more than 5 microns in diameter and twenty-five percent (25%) less than 2.5 microns.[6] The microscopic size of these molecules allows them to stay airborne for much longer time than most other allergens. This, in turn, makes them easy to inhale, causing an allergic reaction.

Avoidance measures:

1. Remove the pet from the home[3,7,8]
2. Regularly wash the pet[7,9]
3. Keep the pet out of the bedroom[3,10,11]
4. Use air purifier with HEPA filters[12]
5. Regularly use high-efficiency vacuum cleaners[3]
6. Use covers and cases for mattresses and pillows[3,13]
7. Remove pillows and other items that may act as a reservoir[3]
8. Use bleach and tannic acid[14]
9. Apply topical lotions (as recommended by your local veterinarian) to the pet cat to encapsulate the allergens on the fur of the animal that lives with patients.[15] Lotions bind and reduce cat allergens in your home. It is advisable to combine several of these measures, as individual measures may not be effective.[3,15,]

Although removing the animal from the home is the most commonly recommended measure, it may be very difficult for patients to agree to this because they love their pets. Focusing on decreasing exposure to allergens while keeping the pet at home, although less effective, can be more practical.

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