

Q. What can I do to control allergy and asthma symptoms at home?

A. You open the shades on a sunny spring morning. Natural light shines through the window. That might sound refreshing. But if all you can see is a cloud of dust and other allergens in the air, you might be thinking, “Oh no. It’s allergy season.”

But there’s good news. A little elbow grease to keep your house clean can help reduce allergies and asthma symptoms.

Asthma and allergy symptoms

If you have seasonal allergies, you know the signs. Your eyes itch and water. You sneeze and cough. Your nose runs. Or all of the above. And if you have asthma, there’s the telltale sign of an allergic reaction...trouble breathing.¹

About 24 million people in the United States have asthma. And more than 50 million people suffer from seasonal allergies.² That translates to a lot of used tissues, elbow coughing, and missed days at work.

Spring cleaning tips to breathe easy

It’s tough to avoid many of the allergens that trigger an allergic reaction. It’s even harder if you spend a lot of time outside. But inside...a little cleaning can go a long way to help you breathe easy and avoid asthma and allergy problems. Here are some things you can do:³



In the kitchen

- Clean floors, cabinet surfaces, backsplashes and appliances weekly. Use soap and water.
- Keep the refrigerator clean. Use a little vinegar to clean.
- Use an exhaust fan when you cook to reduce moisture and mold.

In bedrooms/living room

- Use dust-proof covers for pillows, mattresses, and box springs.
- Wash bedding weekly.
- Vacuum carpets, sofas, and chairs weekly.
- Wash rugs and floor mats weekly. Mop hard surfaces.

In the bathroom

- Use an exhaust fan to reduce moisture from baths and showers.
- Wash rugs, mats, and linens weekly.

ASK THE WELLNESS DOCTOR

- Dry the tub or shower with a towel after use to prevent mold growth.

Around the house

- Keep windows closed during allergy season. Use air conditioning (AC).
- Get rid of any items that collect dust.
- If you have indoor pets, keep them out of the bedroom.
- Change the air filters in your air-conditioning and heater seasonally.
- Avoid using cleaning sprays.⁴ Research shows frequent use of cleaning sprays increases the risk for asthma and breathing problems. Use vinegar.

If you have asthma or allergies, you can still enjoy sunshine and spring. Just take a little extra time to keep your house clean to reduce dust, pollen, mold, and other allergens.

References

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