

Pet Allergy Treatment & Management

The most effective way to manage pet and other allergic rhinitis symptoms is to avoid the allergen(s) causing the symptoms.

Antihistamines and other over-the-counter allergy medications may help relieve symptoms, but they are not ideal as a long-term treatment.

If you have a pet allergy, talk to your allergist / immunologist about the potential for allergy shots (immunotherapy). Allergy shots have a proven track record as an effective form of long-term treatment.

Other ways to minimize pet allergy symptoms include:

- Try not to hug and kiss pets if you are allergic to them.
- Keeping pets out of your bedroom can reduce allergy symptoms since you spend about eight hours every day in this room. So can keeping your pet off of upholstered furniture.
- Bathe your pet every week. Some studies have indicated that some significant reduction in the amount of pet allergens occurs with weekly washing of dogs and cats.
- Have someone who doesn't have allergies brush the pet regularly—outside, not indoors.
- Talk to your vet about getting a well-balanced diet for your pet. This may help to minimize hair loss for the pet, which can reduce dander indoors.
- Use a double or micro-filter bag in the vacuum to reduce the amount of pet allergen present in carpeting that leaks back into the room air.

- Use HEPA air cleaners, which can be a big help in removing unwanted allergenic particles from the air.
- Remove carpeting and rugs, which can trap pet dander and other allergens.

Keeping animals outside is only a temporary solution, since pet dander will eventually make its way indoors as it is carried on clothing.

When all else fails, it may be necessary to find a new home for the pet. Then it may take six months or more after the pet is gone to completely get rid of the dander.

Reference: <http://www.aaaai.org/conditions-and-treatments/allergies/Pet-Allergy.aspx>