

# Reduce Exposure to Your Allergic Triggers

DISCOVER THE CONNECTION

The things that you are allergic to **really** add up

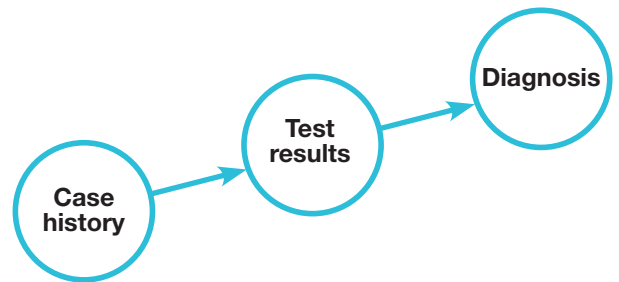
## Discover the connection

Specific IgE blood testing helps to identify your allergic triggers so you and your doctor can develop a plan to reduce your exposure to those allergens to which you are sensitized.

Patient Name: \_\_\_\_\_

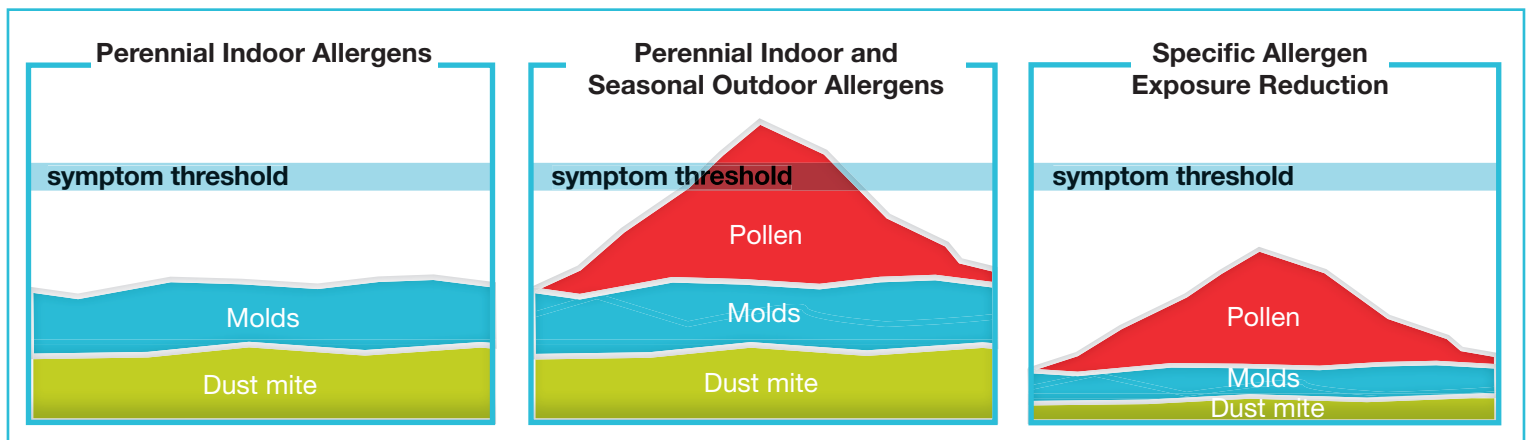
Your Allergy Triggers:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_



If you are allergic to pollen, that might not be the only reason you are sneezing, and if you have asthma that might not be the only reason you are wheezing. It may be because you are sensitive to more than one allergen. Allergens often add up and can cause you to sneeze, wheeze or get a runny nose.

To stay symptom free, you need to stay under your threshold. Every person has a different level at which they show symptoms. Until the level is reached, they are not affected. When that level is crossed however, the combination of allergens turns into symptoms.<sup>1,2</sup>



## House dust mites

Dust mites are microscopic creatures that live in house dust and feed on dead skin flakes.

- Encase mattresses, pillows, and box springs in allergen-proof coverings
- Wash bedding weekly in 130° F hot water
- Keep house clean by vacuuming and reducing clutter
- Wear an appropriate mask while cleaning and avoid area 20 minutes after cleaning
- Change furnace and air conditioner filters
- Use a dehumidifier to reduce the humidity in your home

## Cockroaches

Cockroach saliva, fecal material, and shed skins are the main sensitizers for humans.

- Wash dishes, vacuum, keep food and garbage in closed containers, and take out garbage regularly
- Don't store paper bags, newspapers, or cardboard boxes in your home
- Place bait traps, or call a professional exterminator to eliminate cockroaches
- Seal plumbing openings, cracks, and crevices

## Molds (Indoor)

Molds live both indoors and outdoors. They give off spores that can cause allergic reactions throughout the year.

- Identify and clean moldy areas with fungicide or bleach
- Use a dehumidifier to reduce the humidity in your home
- Fix water leaks
- Clean furnace filters, refrigerator, and dehumidifier (and clean drip pans with bleach)
- Thoroughly dry clothes before storing

## Rodents

Integrated pest management (IPM) approaches offer effective means of eliminating rodents from the home.

- Seal holes and cracks from home to outside
- Seal passages through interior floors, walls, ceiling, and gaps between the bottom of cabinetry or built-in furniture and the floor
- Keep bushes and trees at least three feet from homes
- Ensure trash is stored in secure containers
- Store food in rodent-proof containers

## Animal dander

Allergy to an animal (such as a cat or dog) is actually a sensitivity to the pet's skin flakes and fur.

- Confine the pet to a room with a polished floor and wipeable furniture
- Restrict your furry pet from the bedroom and keep the animal off furniture
- Use high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters and vacuum cleaners
- Wash your pet weekly in warm water and soap
- If you own a furry pet, try to keep it outdoors or find it a new home

## Pollens

Pollens are the tiny airborne particles given off by trees, weeds, and grasses.

- Shower after working outside—wash hair, eyes, and eyelashes
- Remove work clothes outdoors after working outside and carry them in a bag to the washing machine
- Take allergy medicines 30 minutes before going outdoors
- Stay indoors when pollen counts are high for pollens you are allergic to. Check reports for pollen count forecasts or log on to [www.pollen.com](http://www.pollen.com)
- Have someone else do your yard work, or wear a microfiber facemask
- At home and when driving, keep windows closed, and, when possible, use an air conditioner
- Use high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters for furnace and vacuum cleaners

## Molds (Outdoor)

- Avoid mowing grass, handling mulch, compost, or raking leaves
- Avoid using fans that draw in outside air; when possible, use an air conditioner on recirculate and keep windows and doors closed

## If specific IgE sensitization is not detected, your doctor may consider the following non-allergic triggers:

- Cigarette smoke
- Air pollution
- Infection
- Alcohol
- Temperature change
- Aerosol sprays
- Paint / cleaning agents
- Perfume

**References:** 1. Halken, S, et al. Effect of mattress and pillow encasings on children with asthma and house dust mite allergy. *J Allergy Clin Immunol.* 111:1;169-176. 2003. 2. Morgan, WJ, et al. Results of a home-based environmental intervention among urban children with asthma. *N Engl J Med.* 1068-1080. 2004. 3. Environmental management of pediatric asthma. Guidelines for health care providers. National Guideline Clearinghouse. 2008.

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