

## Preventing asthma attacks: What you can do

You may have noticed that certain things such as pollen and pets tend to make your asthma worse. This is because your lungs are very sensitive. You need to learn to identify your asthma triggers and to avoid them as much as possible. Always be sure to follow your doctor's instructions about medications, and remember that *preventing* asthma attacks is the most important part of treatment. Here are some possible triggers and how you can avoid them.

### Pollen and molds

Stay indoors with the windows closed as much as possible during the pollen season. Use an air conditioner if possible.

### House dust mites

Use protective cases on your mattress, box spring, and pillows. Wash all bedding frequently, and keep the house humidity low.

### Animal dander

If you have a pet, keep it out of the bedroom at all times. Animals shed their dander constantly and leave a trail of it wherever they go. Be sure to use your medications correctly if you visit a home with a pet.

### Cockroach allergen

Have the house sprayed—but by someone else. Stay out of the

house for several hours after the spraying. Use roach traps to prevent their return.

### Indoor molds

Because molds collect in damp areas, keep bathrooms, kitchens, and basements well aired and clean. Use a dehumidifier if the basement is damp. This should be cleaned and emptied regularly.

### Tobacco smoke

*Don't smoke.* Encourage family members and guests to quit or to smoke outdoors.

### Colds and infections

Try to avoid people who have colds or flu, and ask your doctor about flu shots. Don't take over-the-counter cold remedies without checking with your doctor.



## NOTES

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