

HOW TO GO ON A



DUST MITE

Killing Sprée

Someone in your house has a dust allergy, and suddenly – you see dust everywhere.

Nothing but dust!

And if you do what you've always done to get rid of it, you know, *dusting*, it seems to be back the very next day (the moment you open your eyes in bed) like a bad horror movie.

So you try some spray that kills dust mites.

Take that!

And that!

Mission accomplished!

And THEN you learn that even when the dust mites are dead, their poop and carcasses continue to exacerbate your loved one's allergic symptoms.

Can you ever win? (*No. But you can get closer than you think.*)

To help protect your family from the allergenic dust mites and their little friends, here are some elimination steps to take in your home.

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DUST MITE DESTRUCTION PLAN OF ATTACK

MUST DO STEPS:

The first focus is always on the bedroom, because that's where we humans spend the most time.

- ☐ Get hypo-allergenic pillows with a dust-mite proof cover on them (no more than 0.1 millimeters space between the weave). See my review of which ones lasted and which ones melted [here](#).
- ☐ Put hypo-allergenic covers on all mattresses in the room (zippered closure that completely encases the mattress is best).
- ☐ Comforters should have hypoallergenic fill.
- ☐ No stuffed animals or other plush things in room.
Same goes for pets
- ☐ Start a habit: Wash bedding at least 1x/week at 130°F or more. (Some washers have a “sanitize” cycle that should do it. Otherwise turn up your water heater for “bedding day” or visit a friend or family member once a month with a sanitize cycle.) Try adding 20 drops eucalyptus oil for added kill-power.
- ☐ Wet dust all surfaces at least once a week. I recommend using a spray that can kill dust mites (a few examples back in the post) and a microfiber cloth to make you pick everything up.
- ☐ Ditch any rugs in bedrooms.

MAKE LIFE EASIER

When you're making so many changes, everything can seem HARD at first.

These 2 are actually easier (insert sigh of relief):

- **Don't make your bed.**
This allows moisture to evaporate; dust mites thrive in humidity.
- **Turn down the heat.**
You save money keeping your thermostat below 70F in the winter, and dust mites are less healthy.

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Next, get some new cleaning routines for the rest of the house.

- ☐ 1-2x a week vacuum all the house carpet with a HEPA vacuum. Optional: Sprinkle diatomaceous earth first, leave for a few hours, then vacuum.
 - *Dust allergic folks shouldn't vacuum unless they have a mask and shouldn't empty vacuum containers at all.*
- ☐ All upholstered furniture should be vacuumed regularly.
- ☐ Buy HEPA filters with rating of 11-12 NERV for your heating/cooling unit. Change every 3 months religiously.
- ☐ Clean bare floors with moist cloth/mop and keep up with dusting all surfaces with some moisture on cloth (white vinegar may kill dust mites, or find other ideas back in the post). Be sure to wash the cloths well between uses.

INTERMEDIATE STEPS:

- ☐ What else gathers dust in the bedroom? Clothing on shelves? Buy a dresser with drawers. Toys in baskets or shelves? Buy tubs with flat lids that are easily dust-able.
- ☐ What else gathers dust around the house? Lots of knick-knacks? Buy a glass-front curio cabinet or simply reduce them. The top of kitchen cabinets? Get a dusting habit up there or in the case of a kitchen remodel, get cabinets that go all the way to the ceiling.
- ☐ Generally avoid anything with lots of grooves for dust to sit on and hide in.
- ☐ Use a dehumidifier in the bedroom and a hygrometer to measure humidity. Should be below 55%.
- ☐ Take daily showers at the end of the day to get allergens off clothing and body.
- ☐ Use a nasal rinse daily or every other day to reduce allergens in the nasal passageways.
- ☐ Consider steam cleaning furniture.

FOR LITTLE ONES WHO LOVE THEIR STUFFIES:

You can freeze stuffed animals for 24 hours to kill mites then take outside and vigorously shake to get the poop off.
Do this regularly.

ADVANCED STEPS:

These may cost some serious \$\$\$!

- ☐ Purchase high quality air filter machines with HEPA filters.
- ☐ Install hard flooring in bedrooms and the least amount of carpet over all in the house as you can. *Cali Vinyl makes vinyl planking with NO offgassing chemicals - you don't want to compromise your indoor air quality in this effort against dust!!*
- ☐ Non-upholstered furniture is ideal, so keep that in mind if you refurnish a room.
- ☐ Instead of shelves in bedrooms, buy furniture with drawers and very flat surfaces that are easy to dust.
- ☐ Buy flat shades instead of blinds and get rid of any upholstered curtains that you can't wash regularly (or aren't willing to) -- especially in bedrooms for both.

THE BOTTOM LINE:

You won't be able to remove all dust or dust mites from your house, but if you can reduce the allergenic load you'll be doing your allergic loved one a favor.

Be sure to [visit all Kitchen Stewardship posts on environmental allergies](#) for more strategies to reduce overall toxic body burden which should help ease symptoms of environmental allergies.

Sources: This information is compiled from conversations with our personal pediatrician and the allergist we visited along with these websites: [1](#), [2](#), [3](#) None of it is intended to be medical advice, and I'm not a practitioner of any kind, just a mom going through something you now understand is pretty hard and scary. I hope this checklist is helpful!

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