

## Domestic Pet Avoidance

*If you have a proven allergy to your pets then the best advice is to remove them from your home. After your pets are removed you should do the following:*

- ▶ Vacuum all surfaces to remove pet hair; also wash all walls and floors
- ▶ Steam clean all carpets and upholstery. Run your heating or air conditioning system to help quickly dry these surfaces and prevent mite or mould growth
- ▶ Wash all bedding and draperies, even if your pet was not directly in contact with them

## Reducing animal allergens

- ▶ Do not obtain any new pets
- ▶ Restrict pets to outdoors or to limited areas in the house – and never in the bedroom
- ▶ Do not allow pets to lick your hands or face
- ▶ Wash cats and dogs 1–2 times a week. Groom dogs regularly outside
- ▶ Wash all bedding and soft furnishings on which an animal has lain
- ▶ Wash everything, including walls, if you have a cat
- ▶ Allergic children should not play on carpets where animals have been
- ▶ People who are in contact with animals outside the home (e.g. horses, or other people's cats) should change their shoes and clothes, and wash their hair, when arriving home
- ▶ If possible, remove carpets from rooms where pets are kept. Vacuum floors regularly. Remaining carpets should be cleaned with a high-temperature steam cleaner and vacuumed regularly with a high-filtration (HEPA) vacuum cleaner such as those awarded our Seal of Approval endorsement
- ▶ Wash all pet bedding and baskets regularly
- ▶ 'Allergy Control Solutions' are available that alter animal allergens to make them less reactive. They can be sprayed on carpets and soft furnishings, and can be added to water when washing fabrics. Use in accordance with manufacturers' instructions
- ▶ Products are also available to condition the animals' skin and reduce the amount of allergen that is release into the environment (e.g. 'Petal Cleanse')
- ▶ Consider using a good air filter to reduce allergen levels in the air, or ventilate rooms well

## Tips on pets

*Follow these general pet hygiene tips to reduce your family's risk of infection.*



- ▶ Wash your hands thoroughly. Always use an antibacterial soap after handling your pets (this is essential before preparing food).
- ▶ Teach children to always wash their hands. You could wipe their hands with a cleaning wipe, especially before they eat anything.
- ▶ Make sure children stay away from dog and cat faeces. Don't let children play around a litter tray and stay clear of dog litter bins at the park.
- ▶ Check that your pets are in good health. Immunisations should be up-to-date. Regular check-ups at the vets can also spot any possible infections.
- ▶ Keep your pet's fur clean. This may simply involve cleaning their paws if they've dug up any soil or a thorough shampoo after swimming in the local pond.

*Last updated: November 2014 Next review date: November 2017*

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