



Asthma Triggers

Asthma episodes can be prevented by staying away from exposures that make your asthma worse. Review the list of items below to see which asthma triggers you're affected by and talk to your doctor about steps you can take to control your asthma.

TOBACCO SMOKE, STRONG ODORS & SPRAYS

- If you smoke, ask your doctor for ways to help you quit.
- Do not allow smoking in your home, car or around you.
- Be sure no one smokes at a child's daycare center or school.
- If possible, do not use a wood-burning stove, kerosene heater, fireplace, unvented gas stove or heater.
- Stay away from strong odors and sprays, such as perfume, talcum powder, hair spray, paints or new carpet.

DUST MITES

Dust mites are like tiny "bugs" you cannot see that live in cloth or carpet. Things that will help the most:

- Encase your mattress and pillow in a special dust-mite proof cover.
- Wash the sheets each week in hot water, hotter than 130°F to kill the mites.
- Keep stuffed toys out of bed. Placing toys weekly in a dryer or freezer may help.
- Remove carpets from your bedroom if you can.

PETS

- Keep pets with fur or hair out of your home if you are allergic to them; however if you own such a pet and cannot part with it, keep it out of your bedroom.

COCKROACHES

Many people with asthma are allergic to the dried droppings and remains of cockroaches.

- Keep all food out of your bedroom.
- Keep food and garbage in closed containers (never leave food out).

MOLD

Indoor:

- Fix leaking faucets, pipes or other sources of water.
- Clean moldy surfaces.
- Dehumidify basements if possible.

Outdoor: During allergy season (when pollen or mold spore counts are high):

- If possible, stay indoors with windows closed during the midday and afternoon. Pollen and some mold spore counts are highest at that time.
- Ask your doctor whether you need to take or increase anti-inflammatory medicine before allergy season starts.

COLD AIR

- Cover your nose and mouth with a scarf on cold or windy days.

EXERCISE OR SPORTS

You should be able to be active without symptoms — see your doctor if you have asthma symptoms when you are active.

- Ask your doctor about taking medicine before you exercise to prevent symptoms.
- Warm up for a period of time before you exercise.
- Try not to work or play hard outside when the air pollution or pollen levels (if you are allergic to the pollen) are high.

Tell your doctor about all the medicines you may take including cold medicines, aspirin and even eye drops.



TOOLS & RESOURCES

From health tips and guidelines that help you stay informed, to useful online and mobile tools that help make it easier to manage your health, Independent Health has the tools and resources you need to lead a healthier life.

To learn more, visit the "My Health" section at independenthealth.com.