

## Dust Mite Allergy in Your Pet

### What are dust mites?

Dust mites (also known as house dust mites) are very small animals that are not visible to the human eye. They live in pillows, blankets, carpets and soft materials in your house. They consume the dead skin that is exfoliated each day.

### What is a dust mite allergy?

When dust mites eat, they give off waste. A dust mite allergy means that a person or pet is sensitive or allergic to the waste of dust mites.

### How can I control the amount of dust mites around the house?

Dust mites like to live in dark, warm and humid places. The best way to reduce dust mites is to focus on bedrooms and bathrooms.

#### In the house

- The most effective way to reduce dust mite exposure is to use zippered allergen barrier covers on mattresses, pillows and pet beds. Breathable covers made from Microfiber are ideal, but also vinyl or plastic covers can be used.
- Wash all bedding and rugs in hot water every 2 weeks to kill the live mites.
- Remove fabric items that can collect dust and cannot be washed.
- If possible, remove the carpet. Carpet is a large source of dust mites in any room. Shampooing carpets can increase dust mite growth. If you must clean the carpets, use a dry shampooing method. Having a hard floor that can be wiped down is best.
- Clean floors, woodwork, walls, ceilings and fixtures with a damp cloth. If possible, do not use dry mops and dusters. When vacuuming, use a vacuum with a Hepa filter.
- Do not use vaporizers or humidifiers in the bedroom
- The greater the humidity, the greater the growth of mites. Use a Hygrometer in the house to measure the amount of humidity. Ideal humidity is between 30%-50%.
- If you have a gas furnace, when it is first turned on for the season it can circulate dust, mold and dander throughout the house. It is ideal to use disposable anti-allergen filters in the furnace, and change them monthly.