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Dust Mite Avoidance Measures

House dust mites (HDM) are microscopic (not visible to naked eyes) insects which feed on sloughed human skin. Optimal HDM growth conditions include a relative humidity of more than 50 % and a temperature between 65°F-75°F.

Locations of highest HDM infestation include pillows, mattresses, box springs, carpet, soft upholstered furniture, draperies and stuffed animals/toys.

Avoidance measures: Priorities:

- Encase mattress and all pillows in allergen-proof cover (vinyl or 6 µm micro denier, or fabric backed with vinyl or urethane membrane).
- Wash bed linens weekly in hot water (130°F) and damp wipe the mattress cover weekly.
- Encase box spring in vinyl plastic.
- Reduce clutter/toys/other collections in bedroom.
- Minimize visits to friends and relatives with feathered or furry pets.
- Vacuum or dust weekly (wear mask and leave area for 20 minutes after cleaning). Use vacuum cleaners that incorporate a double-thickness bag and HEPA filter leak little allergen.
- Use Filtrete (3M) or “microclean” (DuPont) filters to reduce allergen leakage from vacuum cleaner.
- Place stuffed animals in freezer overnight, or hot water wash weekly.
- Hang bulky comforter/bedspread outside in dry, subzero weather.
- Clean or replace heat/air conditioner filter as per manufacturer’s instructions (Pleated 1-inch paper filters are more effective than loosely packed fiber filters).

Avoidance: Long-term modifications:

DUBLIN	EAST COLUMBUS	WESTERVILLE	GROVE CITY	MANSFIELD	ZANESVILLE
(614) 760-0099 (tel)	(614) 864-8238 (tel)	(614) 895-6753 (tel)	(614) 539-3360 (tel)	(419) 526-2125 (tel)	(740) 455-6030 (tel)
(614) 734-0409 (fax)	(614) 751-9776 (fax)	(614) 895-7136 (fax)	(614) 539-5517 (fax)	(419) 522-0241 (fax)	(740) 454-3001 (fax)



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- Reduce indoor relative humidity (RH) with air conditioning or dehumidifier (30%-45% RH). Humidity can also be controlled by increasing ventilation if the outdoor conditions are cold and/or dry.
- Replace carpet with polished flooring (wood, vinyl, linoleum or tile).
- Replace upholstered furniture with leather, vinyl, wood or plastic.
- Replace drapery with wipable shades/blinds or washable curtains.
- Avoid living in basement or in room with cement slab floor. Bedrooms should be preferably upstairs.

Your physician may recommend other measures like medications and allergy injections to better control the symptoms.

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