

## PROVEN SCIENTIFIC TIPS TO HELP WITH DUST MITE ALLERGY

There are a lot of product claims and misunderstanding about dust mites, their ability to cause allergy, and what to do to “get rid of them”. First of all EVERYONE in EVERY HOME has dust mites—we carry them on our clothes, in carpets, bedding, mattresses, and upholstery. No one can eliminate their home of dust mites but we can make their environment not very conducive to their reproduction. The following suggestions are from “Dust Mites” by Matthew Colloff, 2009, who has researched dust mites for over 20 years! In his book he evaluates every type of dust mite “remedy” and examines how successful each treatment was in both field and clinical trials. Below are a summary of what he found:

The BEST: Airing fabrics outside on a hot sunny day or on a cold dry day for 12hrs followed by vacuuming.

Use microporous mattress covers—if not possible, strip off bedding, open windows and doors and allow airing. If not possible, wash bedding (human bedding and pet bedding) in hot water (>50°C) monthly or wash in cold water but add tea-tree oil.

Remove carpet from bedrooms if possible.

ALMOST AS GOOD: weekly vacuuming of carpets and upholstered furniture with a HEPA filter vacuum, if HEPA filter not available, use a steam cleaner for mattresses and upholstery.

NOT SO GOOD: air ionizers, chemical dust mite “killers”—the only one that even helped a little was benzyl benzoate applied to carpets and even then you have to use 4x the amount the manufacturer recommends and leave it on for 12hrs before vacuuming it up.

Dust mites live off of exfoliated skin cells, fungi, bacteria, and viruses in the home. They require the right amount of humidity and temperature to reproduce. This humidity and temperature is found in textiles i.e. carpet, bedding, mattresses, upholstery. In fact when they “feed” on exfoliated skin cells of humans or pets, they actually PREFER the skin cells of allergic humans or pets! The most common dust mites are *Dermatophagoides farinae* and *Dermatophagoides pteronyssinus*—“dermatophagoides” means “looks like something feeding on the skin”.