

DUST MITES

AT A GLANCE

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF DUST MITE ALLERGY

- Repeated sneezing upon waking
- Worsening of symptoms when making the bed
- Feeling better when outside of the house
- Persistently stuffy nose or ears

Dust mites, which are related to ticks and spiders, are invisible to the human eye. Researchers discovered that dust mite allergies are not caused by the mite itself but by a substance in the feces of the mite. A single gram of dust may contain as many as 250,000 dust mite excreta.

Dust mites require warmth and humidity to reproduce. They feast on skin flakes shed by humans. In order to avoid light, they burrow deep into carpets and bedding where the highest number of mites can be found. They also thrive in curtains and upholstered furniture.

HOW TO CONTROL DUST MITES IN THE HOME

- Encase mattresses, box springs and pillows in dust-proof covers
- Wash bedding in very hot water every 7 to 10 days
- Replace bedroom carpeting with vinyl or hardwood floors
- Use a vacuum with a HEPA filter system