

Information sheet 1: **House dust mite allergen avoidance.**



House dust mite (HDM) is a microscopic mite which exists in human dwellings. There are several species with geographical variation. In Australia, relevant species include *D. pteronyssinus*, *D. farinae*, and *B. tropicalis*. HDM lives on skin cells which humans constantly shed. There are proteins in the excreta of HDM which when inhaled or contacted by HDM allergic subjects, will exacerbate allergic symptoms. Symptoms may include rhinitis (hayfever) allergic conjunctivitis, asthma, and eczema.

House dust mite is hardy and difficult to eradicate. The measures noted below may help to diminish the burden of house dust mite allergen and thus reduce allergic symptoms in those with HDM allergy.

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- Have hard floors where possible instead of carpets. Vacuum or clean carpets regularly.
- Avoid using heavy drapes.
- Dust mite covers for mattresses and pillows.
- Or, use a latex pillows and mattress
- Avoid soft toys, wash (or freeze) soft toys regularly.
- Use a hot wash (> 55- 60°C) for bed linen.
- Or, add concentrated eucalyptus oil to the wash. (Add 50ml of eucalyptus oil concentrate emulsified in liquid laundry detergent to a standard tub.

<http://www.allergend.com.au/>

<http://www.miteyfresh.com.au>

<http://www.allergyhelp.com/>