

How Man's Best Friend can become an Asthma Sufferer's Biggest Enemy

An article on what an asthma sufferer should do when faced with having pets in the house.

Pets in an asthma sufferer's household.

One of the main reasons why asthma is so widespread and difficult to control is that it is a very individual disease. While one asthma sufferer might not have any ill effects when faced with a high pollen count, another could be getting rushed to hospital. The stimuli that cause asthma attacks are called triggers. These can be cold air, exercising, pollen, pollution, and yes, household pets are on the list, too.

But before Fido thinks his days are numbered, there are a number of precautions we can take to minimize this particular trigger. Keep most rooms off limits for Fido and his pals. You should never have animals anywhere near your bed if you have asthma. While many people assume it is the hair of the animal that is the source of the problem, in actual fact the real culprit is the dry skin animals leave in their wake (and with amazing frequency). This dry skin is called dander, but to anyone with asthma it should be called danger. The dander from cats and dogs is an extremely sticky substance and will adhere to almost anything (falling hairs included).

Getting rid of this is no easy task, especially if you happen to have carpets everywhere. So what can we do, short of packing Fido off to live with your Aunt Edna? Weekly bathing is a highly recommended way of reducing dander deposits. Obviously the person in the household with asthma shouldn't be the one doing the cleaning, and if possible make sure it is done outside. Ask at your local veterinary to see if they have any special animal shampoos that can further help reduce dander, and while you're there have Fido's hair cut as short as possible.

Another very important option for the asthma sufferer is to consider taking out all the carpets and replacing them with wooden or ceramic floors. This may seem like an extreme measure to take, but when you realize that the majority of vacuum cleaners aren't able to clean deep down into carpets and that the effects of dander can last several months, the benefits of changing your flooring become quite clear.

Does Fido constantly want to give everyone kisses? While this is endearing, remember that the saliva on an animal's tongue contains a protein that can also trigger an asthma attack, and when he's not kissing you he's licking himself, lapping up all that wonderful dander onto his tongue ready to go off and kiss someone else. So the optimal situation would be to train your dog (this isn't really a problem with cats) not to go around kissing everyone in sight. It all really comes down to how bad your asthma is and how much you love your pet.

If you are living an impossible situation, then the only real alternative may appear to be to remove the animal from your house. But before you decide on this option, please make sure that you have checked out this very successful alternative treatment for asthma. It will allow you to keep Fido. After all, it's not his fault.

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About the Author - Karon Beattie is a former asthma sufferer. She is the author of several books including "Naturally Free From Asthma" which describes how she eliminated her own asthma. This book has helped many other sufferers WorldWide do the same.

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