

## Children's Outpatients Department

# Pet Allergen avoidance

Pets are well loved and great companions. Unfortunately they are also a major cause of allergy, the most common being cats and dogs. Other pets that cause a problem are rats, mice, guinea pigs, hamsters, pet birds, horses, cows and poultry. Proteins from their hair, saliva or urine can cause the allergic reaction.

Ideally the pet should be removed from the house, but this is not always possible. If this is the case efforts should be made to reduce the amount of pet allergen in the home.

- Keep pets out of the bedrooms and main living areas (If possible keep pets outdoors)
- Restrict pets to well ventilated non-carpeted areas
- Wash pet bedding regularly at 60 degrees
- Vacuum carpets and soft furnishings regularly with a high filtration unit
- Wash pets weekly in plain water and dry thoroughly
- Consider not replacing the pet when it dies
- As pet allergen remains in the atmosphere, an air filter may reduce airborne allergen

### Remember:

- Pet allergen is increased significantly if the animal is actually in the room
- The concentration of allergen can be 100 times higher in carpeted rooms than those with polished floor or lino
- Cat allergen is everywhere and can remain in the house for several



## Patient Information

months after the cat has left

- You may have never owned a cat but can still be allergic to them
- It is often difficult to avoid the allergens that come from other peoples pets. Cats live in or visit 75% of homes in the UK and cat allergen can be found in schools, nurseries, hospitals and even at the North Pole
- Every time you touch a pet wash your hands
- Rabbit and guinea pigs should live outside

When visiting someone with an animal that triggers your child's allergy it is advisable to take an antihistamine medicine 1 hour prior to your child's visit. Also suggest changing clothes on return to your own home so that animal hair is not spread around your home.

This list is not exhaustive.

**More information on allergies, how to avoid them and how to treat them, can be found on the following websites:**

[www.allergyuk.org](http://www.allergyuk.org)

[www.asthma.org.uk](http://www.asthma.org.uk)

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 7216 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

### Document History

Department:	Children's Outpatients
Contact:	27216
Updated:	June 2020
Review:	June 2023
Version:	5.1
Reference:	HIC/LFT/1069/11