

5 Highly Effective Ways to Get Rid of Dust Mites

[Dust mites](#), their body parts, and their feces are the most common household allergens. They are the source of sneezing, wheezing, coughing, itchy and watery eyes, runny noses, stuffy noses, eczema and asthma.

If you are reading this, chances are you or someone you love was recently diagnosed with an allergy to dust mites. People that are recently diagnosed may experience a wide variety of feelings. Some are in denial, (How can a bug make you sick? But I keep a clean house!) some are overwhelmed (This just seems like too much effort or I will never keep it up!), but the vast majority are mad at the dust mites and are ready to declare war.

The first rule of warfare is to know your enemy. So here is the basic information about dust mites:

- Dust mites, their body parts, and their feces are the most common household allergens.
- These allergens are the source of sneezing, coughing, itchy and watery eyes, stuffy noses, eczema and asthma.
- Dust mites are microscopic creatures that feed on shed human skin cells.
- Dust mites do not bite you.
- You cannot see dust mites, and you cannot feel them.
- Dust mites prefer areas where it is dark, moist, and there is plenty to eat.
- Fiber surfaces are their favorites.
- The bedroom is the most widely infested room in the house.
- Your mattress, pillow, and blanket are the perfect environment to meet all their needs.
- Our sleeping environment is full of fibers that trap shed dust mite carapaces and feces, making it a literally a hotbed of allergy activity (pun intended).

Clearly, dust mites are not welcome in the home. Here are 5 highly effective ways to get rid of dust mites and their allergens as well as a few that we don't really recommend, but they will work.

#1 Get Rid of Their Home or Make it Uncomfortable

Dust mites look for places that are dark, warm, and filled with their favorite food – shed human skin cells. Therefore, they love fiber surfaces. Fibers give dust mites a hiding place and fibers collect food and trap moisture. Fiber surfaces are not easily cleaned. So, over time, more and more dust mite allergens collect in fibers.

Removing dust mites from fabric surfaces requires a multi-prong approach.

Carpeting: While you don't have loads of dust mites actively living and breeding in your carpets, carpets hold the dead body parts that are a normal part of household dust as well as dust mite feces. Try as you may, you can't clean carpet.



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Imagine you took your favorite cotton button-down shirt and tossed it on the floor and walked on it for 6 to 9 months. Then to clean it, you splashed a little water and soap on it and then vacuumed it up. Would that shirt be what you called, ahem, “clean”? Nope. But, that's essentially “carpet cleaning” in a nutshell.

You can spend money on carpet cleaning and carpets will look and smell cleaner, but you can't really clean carpet deep down where the allergens are. Even when you “steam” clean a carpet, you may kill the mites, but you will not remove the allergens. A dead dust mite is just as bad for you as a live one. That is why allergists agree that the best surface for flooring is a hard surface.

That means giving a heave-ho to rugs and carpets. Small throw rugs that can be washed weekly are acceptable. Get rid of all other fiber-based floor coverings.

Replace them with tile, hardwood, laminate, engineered wood, vinyl, or concrete floors.

Hard surfaces can be effectively vacuumed and mopped regularly. With hard surface floors, you will actually remove the dust mites, their feces, and their body parts.

Furniture: Just like carpets and rugs, furniture covered in fabric makes a great hiding place that can't be cleaned thoroughly. Replace your upholstered furniture with hardwood, leather, or synthetic leathers. These hard surfaces don't collect allergens and they are easily wiped clean.

Not able to ditch your couch, curtains and carpet? You can apply denaturing agents. These are number 1 on the list of [Top 5 Allergy Control Products](#).

Denaturing agents are available as sprays and powders. You'll find them labeled "ADMS Anti-Allergen Spray", "X-Mite Powder", and "Anti-Allergy Solution Spray." They work by breaking down the protein that causes the allergic reaction.

So, denaturing agents don't get rid of allergens, but they prevent or limit the allergic reaction. If you rent a home and can't remove upholstered furniture or carpets, they can *bring some relief and are 100% more effective than doing nothing*.

Window coverings: Remove draperies and replace with hard surface blinds. If curtains and valances remain, they must be washed or vacuumed and treated with the anti-allergen spray. We have not had curtains in our bedroom for 25 years. I'll never forget the day we took them down and the dust cloud was created in the process!

Dust catchers: Remove dust catchers and wipe down all hard surfaces at least every 7 days. When cleaning and dusting, everyone always has an aid they use to clean around the home. Personally, I like Allerdust spray. It not only gets rid of dust mites but also helps with pet dander and mold.

Just spray some (more is not better) on an old tee shirt and get to cleaning. It picks up mites and mold particles before they get a chance to become airborne. A great product to have when trying to get rid of dust and mites.

While you are at it, get rid of the excess clutter and dust catchers in the bedroom. Do you really need 12 pillows on the bed?

#2 Starve the Enemy

When it comes to your pillows, mattress, and box spring it is not practical to wash these items every 7 days in hot water. Because of their thickness, denaturing sprays and powders only have limited effectiveness. Since it is impossible to remove dust mites and their allergens from your bed, you must put a barrier between you and the mites.

You want to kill the mite, so do it in a manner that will provide allergen relief. Starve them to death! Yep. That's right kill dust mites over time by starvation.

So, how do you starve them? Cut off their supply of food. This is the natural way to get rid of dust mites and their allergens.

Encase your mattress, box spring, and pillows in special zippered dust mite-proof covers. This puts an allergen-proof barrier between you and the mites.

Their food supply will be limited to what is already in the bed or pillow with them. Slowly, over the years, they will die of starvation. ***From the first night you sleep on dust mite proof covers you will get relief.*** You will not be exposed to the dust mites, their shed body parts, or their feces!

You will also get the satisfaction of knowing that you are killing them softly and slowly...by starvation. Revenge can be sweet indeed!

[Zippered dust mite proof covers](#) for the mattress, pillows, and box spring will prevent you from breathing the dust mite allergens that have collected in the bed. You simply put them on the bed and then cover them with your sheets and pillowcases. FYI - higher quality covers will last you for years so don't waste money on cheap ones. The cheap ones only last a year or two and will need replacing.

Also, hang your comforters, bedspreads and blankets outside in the sunlight (especially if you have wool or silk). The sun will kill the mites. The downside to this tip is that bedding

#3 Hot Water Washing and Cleaning

If you can get an item in the washing machine, you can wash them away! Remove and wash all bed linens once a week (while the zippered cover remains behind as your dust mite proof force field).

Now, regular washing won't eliminate dust mites and their allergens. The water in your "hot tub" of a washing machine would have to be 140° F to kill the dust mite and

eliminate the allergen. Most hot water heaters are not set at temperatures this high for safety reasons.

While water that hot will eliminate dust mites, you could scald yourself in the kitchen or bathroom. Water hot enough to kill mites and denature their proteins is hot enough to damage fabrics and fade colors. Such a bad idea!

So how can you eliminate dust mites without causing bodily harm to you or your family members? Wash with De-Mite or Allergen Wash!

[De-Mite Laundry Additive](#) contains tea tree oil, oil of wintergreen and benzyl benzoate. It will safely eliminate dust mites from anything you can safely wash in the washing machine. By using De-Mite you can eliminate dust mites from your bedding by washing in warm or cold water. Not only will you eliminate dust mites, you will save on energy costs by using cooler water temperatures.

[Allersearch Allergen Wash](#) utilizes super surfactant agents and ACARIL to eliminate all allergens from bedding, clothing, stuffed animals, towels, and rugs. Once again, if you can get it in the washing machine, Allergen Wash will eliminate the dust mites while removing soil.

The big difference between eliminating allergens and dust mites with De-Mite and eliminating with Allergen Wash is how they work.

The Allergen Wash surfactants remove soil and allergens and the De-Mite will denature anything left behind. The De-Mite is an additive that must be used in conjunction with your detergent to eliminate dust mites.

De-Mite does not contain surfactants (those are those soap things). It will not eliminate soil. However, it will eliminate the dust mites, so use it with your own laundry detergent and eliminate those dust mites!

Steam will also kill dust mites. If you have bedding that cannot be washed, steam cleaning is all natural and better than dry cleaning. Both steam cleaning and dry cleaning will take care of surface soil, but dry cleaning will not kill dust mites.

Also, steam clean chairs, sofas, couches and carpets. Steam clean carpets and rugs on a regular basis. Once again, it will at least kill the mites even if it doesn't eliminate the

allergens. *Make sure that the company or equipment you use has a good extraction system. Trading mold for dust mites is a bad thing.*

#4 Nuke ‘Em

A small thermonuclear device will destroy the dust mites, their feces, and the associated allergens. Of course, it would render your home uninhabitable (as if anything would be left of your home) and the neighbors and local authorities would probably not be pleased. This is assuming you can find the uranium or plutonium required to construct your device.

We don't recommend this method to evict dust mites from your home. We do recommend less violent and more eco-friendly methods such as vacuuming and dusting.

Frequent Vacuuming and Dusting

Far less harmful to mankind and the environment is the dust rag and vacuum cleaner. These are preferred to nuclear devices for removing dust mites.

Dust with damp cloths and always start at the top of the room and work down. In other words, dust the items up high before you dust items lower. Do not dust with products that leave a residue. This creates and attracts dust. Personally, we use old cotton tee shirts sprayed with the [Allersearch AllerDust Dusting Aid](#). Once we are done dusting, we toss the shirt into the wash.

Don't dust before going to bed. Always wait at least 2 hours before sleeping in a room that has been dusted. Even if you dust with damp rags, some dust will become airborne and you want to give it time to settle before you go to bed. You don't want dust to slowly settle on you and you don't want to breathe it while you are in bed.

If you dust with microfiber cloths, always dust in one direction; otherwise, you will continually release the dust the rag has picked up.

[Vacuum with a HEPA filtered vacuum cleaner](#). Canister models are preferred to upright models, as they have better seals. Speaking of seals, select a completely sealed vacuum system so that dust and allergens don't leak out of the unit. Make sure the vacuum is fitted with a true HEPA filter. Avoid bagless models.

Avoid models with washable filters. Bagless vacuums and vacuums with washable filters only expose you to the very allergens you want to eliminate; so, avoid these models.

Use the same rules for vacuuming as you do for dusting. Vacuum higher items before lower items. Don't vacuum your bedroom within 2 hours of going to bed. Clean early in the day. All the dust you stir up will have a chance to settle before bedtime. Don't forget to clean the ceiling fan.

Deep Freeze

Your freezer wasn't really designed to store bed linens. The chicken parts and ice cream might object. However, freezing is effective for stuffed toys and small pillows. Place the toy in a plastic bag and put it in the freezer overnight.

If your child can't bear to be away from the toy overnight, then do this first thing in the morning and leave in for 6 to 8 hours.

After the toy has been frozen, remove from the plastic bag and spray lightly with ADMS Anti-Allergen Spray. The cold may kill the dust mites, but the allergen is left behind. By spraying with ADMS you neutralize or denature the allergy-causing dust mite proteins.

After you spray the toy, toss it in the dryer on the fluff setting. This is the setting with air only, no heat. Once the toy is fluffed back up and dry you can give back to your child knowing you did your part to kill those pesky mites.

#5 Desiccants Kill Dust Mites

Dust mites don't drink water. They absorb moisture from the environment around them. It's why they like areas that are damp. Keeps them from feeling "thirsty".

Desiccants remove humidity and moisture from the environment. Common household desiccants are borax, calcium chloride, and silica gel.

Borax is the traditional washing additive found in 20 Mule Team Borax. Find it in the laundry aisle of the grocery store. Calcium chloride is the stuff you add to pickles to make them crunchy. Just read the label on a jar of Claussen pickles.

Buy it where you find canning supplies. Ball sells it as “pickle crisp granules”. Silica gel is used by crafters to dry out flowers. You can find it at a craft shop. Spread desiccants where you want to kill dust mites.

Sadly, you can be the cleanest person in the world and you would still have a problem with dust mites. So, if you're waking up every morning with bleary eyes, runny nose and a cough, you may be under attack from these microscopic opponents.

Dust mite allergens are at the center of most allergies and can be hard to beat, but now that you know what you're up against, you can prepare yourself to fight back and win!