

Dealing with Cat Allergies

Are you one of those people who can find a cat owner simply by walking into a house? If so, you know that simply walking through a door can cause your eyes to swell and tear up from allergic reactions. Some studies have shown that about 15% of Americans are allergic to pets, which is problematic if you love pets. But even among people who are allergic to cats, 1/3 of them own cats anyway. What causes a cat allergy? Most cat allergies result from kitty grooming practices. Cats clean themselves by licking their bodies all over. Their tongues leave saliva residue, which dries on the fur and leaves protein antigens. These antigens in turn float into the air and can become attached to other surfaces - everything from walls and furniture to rugs and cloths. Antigens can also be found in cat urine. Symptoms of cat allergies vary, but usually include one or more of the following: wheezing, hive breakouts, sneezing, swelling of the eyes, and watering of the eyes. These vary in severity. If you own a cat and experience any of these, visit an allergist to discuss some strategies for alleviating your symptoms. Are you one of the millions of people who love cats and want to own one, but are allergic? If so, follow these easy steps to make your transition to pet ownership a little smoother.

1. Invest in filtration systems. Try purchasing a HEPA air cleaner, which will remove the airborne allergens from your house. You, your family, and your cat will all breathe easier, whether you're allergic or not.
2. Keep your cat away from certain areas in your house. This is especially important in the bedrooms and bathrooms, where you need to be able to breathe easily.
3. Change your filters. If your house is heated and air-conditioned using a forced air system, make sure that you regularly change your filters to ensure maximum efficacy.
4. Groom, groom, groom. Give your cat a bath at least once a week. Your pet may not like this, but you will dramatically reduce the number of allergens on its skin and ultimately in your house.
5. Consider specific breeds. This may seem strange, but many people who are allergic to most types of cats have no reaction to Siberian breeds. If you're allergic, you may want to find a local breeder and test yourself to see if this is a viable option.

About the Author

Ian Spellfield, an occasionally frustrated pet owner, tests and reviews cat urine removal products at his blog [Urine Off Reviews](http://www.urineoffreviews.com). You can follow his reviews and occasional heartache at <http://www.urineoffreviews.com>

Source: <http://americanahost.com>