

## Helpful Information and Tips on Handling Cat Allergies

There are no scientifically validated studies to show that any particular breed of cat, whether it's Siberian, Balinese, Russian Blue, or anything else, is 'hypoallergenic'.

Did you know that it's not cat hair, or even dander itself, that causes allergies? It's actually a specific protein in pet dander that people are allergic to! Cat allergens are found in your cat's urine, dander, and saliva. These proteins are tiny, airborne, and can get anywhere. Fortunately, there is a lot you can do to manage pet allergies!

**Tip #1:** Keep your bedroom cat-free. Keeping your bedroom a sanctuary from allergies can make a world of difference for severe allergy sufferers. Special bedding is also available which is less permeable to allergens.

**Tip #2:** Consider a HEPA filter. HEPA filters remove tiny airborne pollutants, like dust mites, pollen, and pet dander, from the air you breathe.

**Tip #3:** Vacuum frequently (with a HEPA filtered vacuum) and change furnace filters often to reduce dander in the air. Clean rugs regularly, wash pet and human bedding weekly, and dust often. Converting to a hard surface floor and minimizing upholstery will also limit places dander can hide!

**Tip #4:** Washing, both you and the cat! Easier than washing the cat is remembering to wash your hands after playing with the cat. Bathing a cat, thankfully, has been shown to be ineffective because it would have to be done daily. A better option is wipe the cat down daily with baby wipes or cleansing wipes meant just for pets. This will sponge up some of the allergens before they enter your environment. You can also brush the cat outside, where all of that dander can blow away somewhere else!

**Tip #5:** Better living through pharmaceuticals. Talk to your physician about allergy medications, antihistamines, and allergy shots.

**Tip #6:** Get some fresh air. Tightly insulated homes trap allergens and heat inside. Open up windows to increase ventilation.

**Tip #7:** Deactivate allergens with commercial allergy sprays. Anti-allergy sprays can be used around the home to render allergens harmless.

**Tip #8:** Clean the cat box. Cat allergens are also found in urine and left in the litter box after use. Clean the box often to not only make your cat happy, but get those allergens out of the house right away. Better yet, have someone else clean the box!