

Useful Telephone Numbers

ENT Partnership

Surrey Clinic – 01252 852552

Frimley Park Hospital

Switchboard – 01276 604604

Parkside – 01276 604703

FI (Children's Ward) – 01276 604226

ENT Ward – 01276 604130

Clare Park Hospital

Switchboard – 01252 850216

Information for Patients on

Animal Allergy

The ENT Partnership – Surrey Clinic

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The ENT Consultants are

Jonathan Hern FRCS (ORL).

Appointed to Frimley Park Hospital in 2003. Special interest in rhinology including rhinoplasty surgery and also voice problems.

David Jonathan FRCS.

Appointed to Frimley Park Hospital in 1991. Special interest in ear surgery, including implantable hearing aids. Involved in the regional training of ENT surgeons.

Andrew McCombe MD FRCS (ORL).

Appointed to Frimley Park Hospital in 1995. Special interest in head and neck surgery. Involved in the management of NHS services. Special interest in medicolegal work.

Introduction

Pets are known to be a major source of year-long (perennial) allergy. With pets the substances that cause allergic reactions (allergens) are found mainly in the air. They are very small, can stay airborne for up to 24 hours and are easily transported in the air from one place to another. Therefore, animal allergens can give rise to reactions even when the pet is not around. Cats are the commonest allergy causing animals in the UK and male cats shed more allergens than female ones.

Animal allergens are found in the saliva and oily secretions not in the fur itself. However, animals that groom themselves (e.g. cats) can leave deposits of these secretions or 'dander' on their coats or in places where they have been resting.

Animal	Sources of allergens
Cat	Saliva, fur, skin flakes
Dog	Hair, urine, saliva*
Mouse, rat, rabbit and guinea pig	Hair, urine, saliva,
Horse	Hair, urine, saliva
Budgerigar, canary, parrot and pigeon	Feathers, droppings

* possibly

Physical conditions that are most commonly associated with pet allergy include rhinitis, asthma, conjunctivitis and urticaria (nettle rash). Eczema can also be associated with pet allergy.

Treatment

The **best** treatment for animal allergies is **animal avoidance** combined with **vigorous** cleaning measures. This includes:

- Not having birds and furry animals such as cats, dogs, guinea pigs or gerbils in the house.
- If you are reluctant to remove the family pet, it should only be allowed into specific areas such as the kitchen and as much as possible keep it outside. Do **not** let the pet come into the bedrooms or main living areas of the house.
- When the time comes, an informed decision should be made whether or **not** to replace the family pet.
- Vigorous cleaning measures (e.g. all flat surfaces, carpets, curtains and bedding) are required for a period of time (up to six months) after the removal of the pet to remove any left behind (residual) animal allergens from the home.
- Recent studies have suggested that washing cats and dogs (e.g. once a week) when combined with other measures, is helpful in reducing the amount of allergens in the home.
- Weekly vacuum-cleaning of soft furnishings and carpets also helps to reduce the amount of animal allergens in the home. Using a vacuum that has been fitted with a micro-filter or one with a high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter is recommended.

Regular airing of the home is also beneficial.

Sources of additional information

The Surrey & Hampshire ENT Partnership
www.entpartnership.co.uk

British Association of Otorhinolaryngologists
www.entuk.org

The National Asthma Campaign
<http://www.asthma.org.uk>

The American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology (ACAAI)
<http://allergy.mcg.edu>

British Allergy Foundation
Deepdene House, 30 Bellegrove Road, Welling, Kent DA16 3BY
Helpline: 020 8303 8583

The National Asthma Campaign
Providence House, Providence Place, London N1 0NT
Tel: 020 7226 2260