

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

House Dust Mite 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.

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

Introduction – House Dust Mite

Although there are many causes of allergy (e.g. pollens, pets) the most common household allergen is the house dust mite. These tiny creatures are only 0.3mm long and are invisible to the naked eye.

House dust mites can be found in every home, no matter how clean, especially in mattresses and bedding. They thrive in warm, humid and dark conditions. They die when exposed to very hot or cold conditions (e.g. hot machine washing, freezing). House dust mites feed on the dead skin flakes that we shed constantly.

They do not bite or sting. The allergens are contained in their microscopic faecal droppings, which can easily become airborne. When the allergens are inhaled or touch the skin they can trigger asthma, eczema and allergic rhinitis.

House Dust Mite Avoidance

Although it is impossible to avoid house dust mites entirely the following measures can help reduce your exposure to them.

- Cover pillows duvets and mattresses with allergen barrier covers and/or
Hot wash (60° C) pillows duvets and blankets, at least fortnightly, to destroy the mites and remove their faeces.
- Change bedding weekly and hot wash (60°C) all bedding. Vacuum both sides of the mattress and under the bed. Use synthetic (i.e. non-feather) duvets and pillows. If bunk beds are in use the allergic person should sleep in the top bunk.
- Vacuum floors, curtains and upholstered furniture weekly using the appropriate tools (e.g. stair brush, crevice nozzle, upholstery brush). If possible, use a vacuum cleaner with a double filter system or a high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter to reduce the amount of dust recycled into the air.
- Dust all flat surfaces (e.g. shelves, windowsills, and tops of cupboards) on a weekly basis, using damp cloths.
- If possible have a non-allergic person do the cleaning. If this is not possible a protective facemask should be worn when vacuuming and/or dusting. Keep allergic children away from the room/s during cleaning and for at least 2 hours afterwards.
- Avoid non-removable soft furnishings (e.g. sofa covers), heavy curtains and venetian blinds. The use of vinyl floor coverings or wood floors and small washable rugs are recommended for places where the allergic person spends most long periods of time (e.g. bedroom).

- Keep stuffed/fluffy toys to a minimum in the bedroom. Ideally, hot wash (60° C) them fortnightly and/or place them in the freezer for 3-4 hours to minimise the build up of house dust mites.
- Reduce humidity in rooms by opening the windows daily. Clothing should be stored in closed cupboards or drawers. Avoid drying clothes inside the house.
- Keep pets out of the bedroom and off soft furnishings.
- There are sprays available that state they kill the house dust mite. These can be expensive and there is not yet enough proof to confirm that they have any usefulness in the long-term.

Suppliers of 'Mite' Proof Covers

Covers can be purchased from any good linen store, chemist (i.e. Boots) or mail order catalogue.