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MOUSE AND COCKROACH ALLERGENS

Contrary to popular belief, it is not necessary to have infestations of mouse and cockroach in your house to be exposed to mouse or cockroach allergens. Primary culprits of exposure come from particles of feces from cockroach and from feces, urine, epithelium (skin cells), and dander from mice. These allergens become airborne as the particles dry.

Mouse and cockroach have been found to be components in house dust. Both mouse and cockroach contaminates can be found in fabric, foods, cardboard, carpeting and many other objects and materials that are brought into the home such as bedding, clothing and packages.

Cockroach allergens act similar to dust mite allergens. Environmental controls should be handled in the same manner, as a significant number of homes without infestation, have high levels of cockroach allergens in the home. Environmental controls would include dust mite proof covers for the mattress, box spring and pillow cases. Measures to cut down on dust collectables especially in the bedroom and vacuuming and dusting often would be advisable. Flooring would be preferred over carpeting whenever possible. A hepa filter for the bedroom and/or most frequently used room(s) and a hepa filter vacuum may be purchases to consider.

There is also exposure outside the home to consider as well. Exposure may be at work places, schools, restaurants and stores to name a few.

Food related exposure should also be considered. The FDA has set an allowable percentage of insect body parts to be present in some foods, particularly chocolate and coffee. Some other foods include, but are not limited to peanut butter, macaroni, fruit, cheese, popcorn and wheat.

Both mouse and cockroach allergens have been linked to triggering asthma in existing cases and, possibly, causing asthma in children.