

# Allergies Can Be A Real Pet Peeve

(NAPSA)—As many owners will confirm, pets are more than animals living in their house. They are part of the family. For allergy sufferers, this bond often means that it will take more than a stuffy nose and sneezing to separate them from their favorite Fido or feline.

An estimated 10 percent of the population is allergic to pets. But because more than 70 percent of U.S. households have a dog or cat, these pet allergy sufferers may frequently come in contact with animals, and sometimes even have pets living in their own homes.

“I work with lots of families who have allergies and chose to live with a pet anyway,” said Dr. Jeff Werber, a practicing Los Angeles veterinarian and Emmy Award-winning pet health reporter. “Most people view their pets as beloved members of the family, and parting with them because of allergies is not an option.”

## Understanding Pet Allergies

Although most people think it is hair or feathers that cause allergic reactions, it is actually the saliva and proteins in animals' dander that trigger symptoms, such as sneezing, itchy nose, and nasal congestion. Surveys have found that sufferers consider nasal congestion to be the most bothersome allergy symptom. Bathing and brushing your pets regularly will help remove allergens from their bodies.

“Soap is not necessary and can dry out your pet's skin,” said Dr.



Werber. “Bathing with water alone is fine.”

A common myth about dog allergies is some breeds cause less severe allergic reactions than other breeds. All dogs have dander, which means they all can cause an allergic reaction.

## Household Tips

- Try keeping your pet in rooms that don't have carpeting or upholstered furniture, such as the kitchen.

- Train your four-legged friend to stay off of the bed and to rest in a separate room from where you sleep. Pets' dander and saliva can trigger symptoms all night.

- Minimize the time a pet spends outdoors on days with high pollen counts. Pets also can bring outdoor allergens like pollen from grass and weeds into the home.

- Visit [www.nasal-allergies.com](http://www.nasal-allergies.com) to check the allergy forecast for your area before going out to throw a Frisbee or take a long walk.

- Vacuum floors and upholstered furniture frequently to remove pet dander. Surfaces like hardwood or tile floors are preferred over carpeting for allergy sufferers as dander can easily be removed from them.

- Have a nonallergic person clean your pet's cage, preferably outdoors.

## Symptom Control

Rather than enduring symptoms, visit your doctor to discuss your allergies. Your physician can help properly diagnose your condition and prescribe medicine to help treat, or even prevent, your symptoms.

“If a patient is complaining of itchy eyes and throat, I'd suggest a non-sedating antihistamine. For the treatment of nasal allergy symptoms, including congestion, a prescription nasal-inhaled steroid is often recommended,” said Dr. Matthew Clarke, Associate Director of the Occupational Health Center at North Shore University Hospital at Forest Hills in Forest Hills, New York. Nasal-inhaled steroids, which are available for adults and children, include NASONEX® (mometasone furoate monohydrate) Nasal Spray, 50 mcg (calculated on the anhydrous basis).

“I see patients who think they only need to use their medication when they are experiencing symptoms,” said Dr. Clarke. “By following some simple steps at home and using medication daily, year-round, allergy sufferers and their pets can live comfortably together.”

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NASONEX® is the only once-daily prescription nasal-inhaled steroid approved to help prevent most seasonal nasal allergy symptoms, including nasal congestion, in adults and children 12 years of age and older when NASONEX is started 2 to 4 weeks prior to allergy season, and the only nasal-inhaled steroid approved to treat nasal allergy symptoms, including nasal congestion, in patients as young as 2 years of age. Take regularly, as effectiveness depends upon regular use. Maximum treatment effect is generally reached after 1 to 2 weeks. NASONEX also is the only nasal-inhaled steroid approved for the treatment of nasal polyps in adults 18 years of age and older. Side effects were generally mild and included headache, viral infection, sore throat, nosebleeds, and coughing. Please see accompanying full prescribing information. Full prescribing information also is available at <http://www.spfiles.com/pinasonex.pdf>. Ask your doctor if NASONEX is right for you.