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If your allergies act up inside your home, chances are you're not very comfortable in your bedroom. Time to take action.

The key to making the bedroom cozier for you is to make it less cozy for mold, dust mites, and other allergens that make you sneeze and snuffle.

1. Kick Dust Mites Out of Bed

Bedding is a popular home for dust mites, a common trigger of allergies and asthma. Try this:

- Put dust mite-proof covers on pillows, comforters, mattresses, and box springs.
- Wash your bedding every week in

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Seasonal Allergies: 4 Routes to Relief

Ah, fall. The perfect time to get outside for long walks in the neighborhood, hikes in the hills, and autumn gardening. But that "ah" can quickly become "ah-choo" if you're one of the 36 million Americans with seasonal

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allergy problems. The runny nose, itchy eyes, and congestion -- all typical fall allergy symptoms -- can slow you down and make you miserable. While there have been no dramatic advances recently in allergy treatment, experts say if you are allergy-prone, you can take a number of...

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2. Vacuum Regularly

Carpeting is another happy habitat for dust mites. Replace bedroom carpeting with hardwood floors or linoleum and washable area rugs.

If you must have carpet in your bedroom:

- Choose low-nap over high-nap carpet, which holds more allergens.
- Every week, clean the carpet using a vacuum with a HEPA filter. Use a double bag and wear a dust mask to avoid inhaling dust kicked up into the air by vacuuming.

3. Use Light and Breezy Window Treatments

Say good-bye to dust catchers like heavy, dry clean-only drapes and traditional blinds. Instead, try:

- Washable cotton or synthetic curtains

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- Washable roller shades

Wipe window frames and glass to prevent mold and mildew. They can cause upper respiratory symptoms if you have allergies or asthma.

4. Declutter Your Bedroom

To breathe better in bed, think Scandinavian -- minimal fabric, lots of metal and glass, light on knickknacks. The less upholstery in the room, the better.

Move books, magazines, and other decorative items to another room -- unless you want to dust your bedroom often. Don't store things under your bed.

5. Protect Bedroom Air

Dust mites and mold may like a warm, damp bedroom, but you probably don't.

- When it's warm, use your air conditioner, no matter how tempting the outdoor breeze is.
- If you live in a humid climate, use a dehumidifier to help keep humidity at 30% to 50%.
- Turn down the heat or turn up the AC. Dust mites don't reproduce well when it's below 77 F.

You can also keep bedroom air cleaner with an air filtration system that uses a small-particle or HEPA filter. Use it in your central air conditioning and heating systems or use it in a portable air conditioner unit.

6. Make Your Bedroom a Pet-Free Zone

Restricting a pet from the bedroom can be hard, but dander, saliva, and urine from pets with fur can carry allergens. Ideally, your pet should sleep elsewhere. If not, do your best to keep dander down. For example, vacuum even more often.

7. Ban Roaches

The thought of roaches in any part of your home, let alone the bedroom, is creepy. But roaches are a fact of life, especially in crowded cities and very humid climates. For many people with asthma, especially children, cockroach droppings bring on symptoms.

To keep roaches in their place (which is out of your place):

- Seal cracks and crevices.
- Fix leaks in pipes and faucets and avoid leaving wet towels on the floor. Roaches thrive on water.
- Keep food in tightly sealed containers and keep your dishes clean.
- Consider hiring an exterminator.

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