

# The Link Between Pets, Allergies & Asthma

They say a dog is a man's best friend....but if you have asthma (or allergies), pets may be harmful to your health. You may need more medication and your asthma may be harder to manage. Talk with your doctor.



## Furry Pets and Asthma



Furry pets can trigger allergic reactions and asthma attacks. The saliva and dander (or skin flakes) of dogs, cats, birds, gerbils, rats and guinea pigs cause most allergic reactions. If you have allergies, your best choice is a pet with no fur or feathers: snakes, lizards, ants, frogs, spiders and **FISH!**



## What if Your Pet Bothers Your Asthma?

If you or someone in your family is allergic to your pet, giving the pet to a relative or close friend may be a good solution. Your health will improve and you will still be able to see your pet. If you do decide to give up your pet, be sure to clean your home well after he's gone, but remember that it may take 20 weeks for allergen levels to drop to the levels found in homes of those without pets.



## If you decide that you cannot give up your furry pet....



- Have your pet bathed twice a week.
- Have someone else wash, brush and groom your pet.
- Keep your pet out of the main living areas and bedrooms.
- Avoid petting, hugging or kissing the pet if you have allergies.
- Clean upholstered furniture completely or replace with leather.
- Replace carpets with linoleum or wood flooring.
- Use a HEPA vacuum cleaner and/or HEPA air cleaner.
- Use hypo-allergenic bedding.
- Wash all bedding in very hot water.
- Make sure your home is well ventilated.