

## PREPARATION AND MAINTENANCE OF A DUST FREE ROOM

The instructions offered below may seem unnecessarily severe, but experience has shown that a dust free environment for even a part of 24 hour period will be substantially beneficial for the dust sensitive patient. It is impossible to control the dust factor throughout the home or place of work, but the sleeping quarters do lend themselves to rigid control.

The infiltration of dust into a bedroom is insidious and cannot be controlled by ordinary housecleaning methods. Dust filters into the room from around the windows and spaces around the frames. Old dust, which is the most antigenic also comes from other rooms in the house, while many heating systems are dust circulators.

Pillows, mattresses, box springs, bed pads, blankets, bed spreads, comforters, quilts, stuffed furniture, rugs and drapes all break down to produce substances of allergic importance and, if mites are present all become collectors of mite antigens.

### **CLEANING WALLS, CEILING AND FLOOR**

Before cleaning the room remove all furniture, rugs, carpets, curtains and drapes. All the clothes closets should be emptied (keep clothes elsewhere or keep clothing scrupulously clean, dust free, and store in plastic bags). Clean the vacant room as follows: Seal all furnace pipes leading into the room, scrub radiators, ceilings, walls and floor of closets and wax the floors. Linoleum is the preferred floor covering. Hardwood floors are also satisfactory. If mold had grown on walls or window sills it should be washed off with soap, water and household bleach or a potent mold inhibitor.

### **PREPARATION OF BED**

Scrub the bed frame and the springs. The room should contain only a bed of metal or wood. If a box spring is used it must be covered with a dust proof covering or if uncovered vacuum it weekly. (If a second bed is in the room, it must be treated in the same manner). A foam rubber mattress does not require covering as it does not produce dust. In humid climates where mold can grow on rubber or synthetics a cover may be necessary.

### **CARE OF BEDDING**

Foam rubber or a synthetic pillow must be used. Do not use feather, kapok or down pillows. Allergen proof coverings are available and can also be used on pillows. Use freshly washed cotton bedding, cotton sheets and pillow cases. Use cotton, polyester or other synthetic fiber blankets. Unnapped 100% wool blankets may be tolerated. Do not use quilts, comforters or mattress pads. A cotton blanket folded in half may be substituted for a mattress pad. Wash blankets every four to six weeks.

### **FURNISHINGS**

No upholstered furniture, stuffed toys or drapes should be used in a the room. A wooden chair which has been scrubbed and lintless cotton rag rugs or synthetic fiber rugs (washed at least once a week) may be used. Plain light curtains washed once a week may be used on the windows. Do not use shag or chenille type fabrics.

### **DUST PROOFING**

There are available dust proofing products which inhibit dust formation on furniture, rugs, blankets and drapes.

It is recommended that this type of product be used in the dust free room in particular, as well as in the rest of the house to immobilized old dust and retard the formation of new dust. These products are easily applied either by aerosol spray can or simply spray equipment.

## **GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

The dust free room must be cleaned daily with an oiled or damp cloth and given a thorough and complete cleaning once a week. The patient of course should not be in the room during the cleaning.

If possible, keep the room for sleeping only; dress in another room. At all times brush clothes and shoes before entering the bedroom since these may carry in the allergenic pollens, molds and dusts.

Keep the doors and windows of this room closed as much as possible; especially when not using the room. An air-conditioner may be needed during the summer to keep the room comfortable for sleeping. Avoid drafts. Keep humidity as low as possible to prevent mold growth.

Articles of furniture which contain allergenic dusts should be removed from the house. If this is not possible, each article should be frequently vacuumed, cleaned thoroughly at a time when the patient is out of the house. Following the vacuum cleaning the house should be aired thoroughly. Questionable furniture that is retained should be sealed with a dust proof plastic cover.

If the patient is a child, do not keep toys which will accumulate dust in the room. Use only washable toys that have non-allergenic covers and stuffing and which are heat dried thoroughly to prevent mold growth. Avoid toys with animal hair covers or stuffing of feathers, sawdust, kapok or hair.

Remove all dogs, cats, birds and other pets from the house. Avoid carpet pads that contain animal hair, coarse vegetable fibers or animal glues. Pets, such as dogs, cats and birds may contribute to dust allergies and should be kept out of the house. Do not use insect sprays or powders. Avoid odoriferous substances such as camphor, tar, room deodorants, etc. Be sure all clothes that have been put away are well aired before using them.

Electrostatic air filters are available as single room units or for complete home air filtration. These units are helpful in removing a large number of the particles of dust, pollen and mold spores from the air in the home as well as filtering out pollen and mold spores from the outside air, thus removing a potential source of allergy exposure. Since some of this equipment may produce excess ozone, installation should always be discussed with the physician prior to purchase.

Room sized air cleaners should be run continuously and the windows and doors kept closed to prevent contamination from other rooms or outdoors. The collection plates on the electrostatic type air cleaner should be cleaned frequently according to the manufacturer's instruction. Dirty collecting plates are inefficient filters and may produce ozone which is irritating to the eyes and respiratory tract. None will be effective unless their installation is engineered properly. Therefore always deal with established, reputable heating and ventilation contractors and consult your physician.