

Controlling Exposure to Pollens

Pollen allergies are generally caused by pollens carried by outside air currents. Pollens dispersed by air may travel for great distances. For example, ragweed pollen has been collected as far as 400 miles out to sea and as high as two miles in the air. Plants can generate millions of pollen particles per day and most never reach their targets. Instead, they may be inhaled or absorbed into the skin of the pet causing a sensitized pet to have an allergic reaction.

Total avoidance of allergenic pollens is impractical. There are, however, several methods that can help decrease exposure to pollens (when used in conjunction with other treatments, such as immunotherapy).

The following are suggestions to aid in reducing exposure to pollen:

- Keep lawn grass cut short to reduce seed and pollen production.
- Keep pets off the lawn one to two hours after mowing or when the lawn is wet.
- Avoid prolonged outdoor exposure during peak pollen counts, allergy seasons, when humidity is high and on windy days.
- Avoid letting pet put head out of car windows when traveling.
- Confine pets indoors during early morning and evening hours when pollen counts are usually highest.
- With a damp cloth, wipe pet's feet, body and face after being outside to remove pollen from hair, coat and skin.
- Close windows and use air conditioning when possible.
- Use high-efficiency air conditioner and furnace filters.
- Vacuum and dust frequently, keeping pet out of the room while doing so.
- Dry pet's bedding in the dryer instead of outside.
- Frequently bathe pets using hypoallergenic shampoos, leave-in conditioners and cool water rinses.
- Keep pets groomed and clipped to lessen collection of pollen on hair, coat and skin.

For questions or further assistance,
please call Heska's Medical and Technical Consultation Group at **1-800-GO HESKA, option 5.**

