



Hay fever? How to prepare your home this pollen season

Spring has sprung and pollen is in the air. If you experience hay fever symptoms, like a runny nose, itchy or watery eyes or sneezing, it's important to keep your home healthy by cutting down on allergens.

Pollen season typically strikes South East Australia between 1 October and 31 December with pollen levels tending to be higher on warm dry days.

"Limiting your exposure to pollen – particularly in your home - can be a big help," said Adele Taylor, Program Manager, Sensitive Choice® at the National Asthma Council Australia. "Most people affected by seasonal hay fever are allergic to dust mites, pollen or moulds."

"We've developed some handy [spring cleaning tips](#) to help you prepare your home."

Follow these tips so that your family can breathe easier this allergy season:

- Wash sheets, pillowcases, soft toys in the bedroom weekly in water hotter than 55°C
- Cover mattresses, quilts and pillows with dust mite-resistant encasings
- Open curtains and air bedding in the sunshine and give them a regular clean
- Consider venetian blinds or flat blinds, which are easier to clean than heavy curtains. External shutters are another option
- Use a damp or electrostatic cloth to dust hard surfaces (including floors)
- Ask someone else to do the vacuuming, as this increases allergen in the air for up to 20 minutes. Also consider using a vacuum cleaner with an asthma and allergy sensitive HEPA filter
- Keep rooms dry and well ventilated
- Clear out the clutter

Another way to manage hay fever and/or allergy symptoms is to use products that may reduce allergy triggers in day to day life.

"National Asthma Council created Sensitive Choice® to help consumers identify asthma and allergy aware products," said Ms Taylor.

"Products marked Sensitive Choice® have been assessed by an independent panel. So, next time you go shopping, look for the reassuring blue butterfly on product packaging, including bedding, cleaning products, vacuum cleaners, and more."

Sensitive Choice® has helped Australians reduce their allergy reactions for many years. Its partners provide funds for research and education led by the National Asthma Council to reduce the health, social and economic impacts of asthma and allergies both in Australia and overseas.

If you are one of the four million Australians with allergy symptoms, visit the Sensitive Choice® website www.sensitivechoice.com for products and services that may be a better choice for you and your family.

All Sensitive Choice® approved products are listed on the website, sorted by the following category or allergy triggers:

Category	Trigger
Indoor climate control	Chemicals
Cleaning products and services	Dust Mites
Bedding and Furniture	Mould
Building and Renovating	Pets
Flooring	Pollen
Health and Personal care	Smoke
Vacuum and deep cleaners	
Pool and Spa care	

Ms Taylor urged Australians not to wait for hay fever symptoms to start, but to speak to your doctor or pharmacist, take prescribed medications and create an allergy free home environment.

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For further information, or to arrange an interview with a National Asthma Council Australia spokesperson, please contact:

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