

# DOG ALLERGY

If your nose runs or you start sneezing and wheezing after petting or playing with a dog, you may be allergic to dogs.

Dogs produce multiple allergens, or proteins that can cause allergy. These allergens are found in dog hair, dander, saliva and urine. All dogs produce allergens; studies have not shown that dogs can be hypoallergenic (not cause allergy). Dog allergen levels increase if the dog lives indoors and are higher in the rooms where a dog is allowed.

Dust and pollen in a dog's coat can also cause allergy symptoms. In those cases, the allergy is to dust or pollen, not to the dog.



## Contact Us

Phone: (843) 863-1188

Fax: (843) 863-8286

Website: [www.lowcountryent.com](http://www.lowcountryent.com)



LOW COUNTRY ENT  
2850 TRICOM STREET  
NORTH CHARLESTON, SC 29406



---

## Low Country ENT

EAR, NOSE & THROAT · HEAD & NECK SURGERY ·  
HEARING AIDS · BALANCE TESTING · ALLERGY TESTING &  
IMMUNOTHERAPY

**DOG**

## Dog Allergy Management and Treatment

Avoidance is the best way to manage a dog allergy. If you have a dog and are allergic to dogs, consider removing the dog from the home.

If you have a dog but don't want to find it a new home, or if your family wants a dog even though someone in the household is allergic, here are some strategies that may help keep symptoms at bay:

- Keep the dog out of your bedroom and restrict it to only a few rooms. Be advised that keeping the dog in only one room will not limit the allergens to that room.



- Don't pet, hug or kiss the dog; if you do, wash your hands with soap and water.



- High-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) cleaners run continuously in a bedroom or living room can reduce allergen levels over time.



- Regular use of a high-efficiency vacuum cleaner or a central vacuum can reduce allergen levels.



- Giving your dog a bath at least once a week can reduce airborne dog allergen.



Treatments for dog allergy vary, depending on the symptoms.

Nasal symptoms are often treated with steroid nasal sprays, oral antihistamines or other oral medications. Eye symptoms are often treated with antihistamine eyedrops. Respiratory or asthma symptoms can be treated with inhaled corticosteroids or bronchodilators to either prevent or relieve respiratory symptoms.

Allergy shots (immunotherapy) are an effective treatment of allergies by building tolerance over time through gradually injecting increasing doses of an allergen.

## Diagnosing Dog Allergies

If you suspect that you are allergic to dogs, see an allergist for proper diagnosis and treatment.

A skin-prick test is the most common way of diagnosing a dog allergy. For this test, a small amount of an extract of dog allergen is placed on your skin. Your skin is then pricked with a small, sterile probe, allowing the liquid to seep under the skin's surface. You'll then be monitored for swelling and redness or other signs of a reaction, signaling an allergy. Results typically become evident within 15 to 20 minutes.

Even if you're sure your symptoms are caused by a dog, it's a good idea to be tested, since the symptoms may actually be caused by other environmental exposures.



## Is there an allergy-free dog?

While poodles, Portuguese water dogs and a number of other breeds (including several types of terriers) have a reputation for being hypoallergenic, a truly allergy-free breed does not exist. A [2011 study](#) compared dust samples from homes with dog breeds reported to be hypoallergenic and those of homes with other dogs. The levels of dog allergen in homes with “hypoallergenic” dogs did not differ from the levels in homes with other breeds.