Understanding Allergies: Allergies can bring about sneezing, congestion, watery eyes, wheezing and other tell-tale symptoms. If your physician has diagnosed you with allergies, you may be wondering what causes them or what the best steps are to decrease symptoms? Learning about allergies will help you understand the steps to take as you follow your physician’s advice for treatment. To get you started, here are some allergy basics:

Allergens People with allergies react to substances called allergens. Allergens are harmless to most people. But when you have allergies, your body finds these substances to be dangerous and reacts by producing antibodies against them. People vary in their degree of sensitivity to allergens, the types of symptoms they experience and the severity of their allergic reactions, but controlling your home environment is a great step in finding relief.

Indoor Allergens
The three primary indoor allergens are dust mite allergens, mold spores and pet dander.

Allergic Threshold
Your allergic threshold determines how sensitive you are to an allergen. If you are very sensitive and it doesn’t take much exposure to cause an allergic reaction, you have a low allergic threshold.

Allergen Load
The total exposure at any given time to the various allergens that you are sensitive to.

Allergen Avoidance
Allergen avoidance steps are actions taken around the home to reduce your exposure to allergens. These steps involve cleaning and containing allergens to minimize your exposure.

Allergy Relief: A Simple Analogy
Picture a glass, which represents your allergic threshold. A small glass (low threshold) overflows easily when too much liquid is added. But, a larger glass (high threshold) can tolerate greater amounts of liquid before it overflows. The liquids filling the glass are allergens and there may be one or several types that cause the overflow. Contact with too many allergens, or ones that you’re particularly sensitive to, will cause the glass to overflow.

The glass overflowing is your allergic reaction. Allergy relief is found by minimizing the amount of exposure to the types of allergens that cause your glass to overflow. If you take simple allergen avoidance steps around the home, you can help reduce your allergic load by keeping exposure to various allergens to a minimum, which will go a long way toward achieving allergy relief and a healthier lifestyle.

Reducing your overall exposure doesn’t have to be an all or nothing project. As long as you keep your exposure below your allergic threshold, you can prevent allergy symptoms from flaring up.

The Basic Facts on Allergies
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The First Step: Controlling Allergens in the Bedroom
It’s most important to focus on the bedroom first, since the bedroom is where you spend up to one-third of your day and it’s where you come into contact with the biggest allergen source—your bed! What should be a clean and restful place is packed with up to 1 million dust mites that produce the allergens that cause your symptoms. Physicians recommend covering your bed in allergy encasings to find relief.

Here are some frequently asked questions about encasings and what they do:

Q: Why is encasing the bed important for allergy relief?
A: Dust mites can live in any part of the bed, including pillows, mattress, box spring and comforter. While you sleep, you are inhaling allergens from the bed from dust mites or pet dander. As you move while sleeping, these allergens are released into the air and inhaling them can trigger allergic symptoms. Covering the bed with an encasing blocks the allergens from being released into the air and keeps you from inhaling them throughout the night.

Q: What is an encasing?
A: Think of an encasing as a protective barrier (like a sealed envelope) between the source of the allergens and you. The encasing zips around the bedding (NIH) recommends washing sheets, blankets and other bedding weekly in hot water to kill dust mites. In addition, carpet in the bedroom should be treated or removed as carpet is the second largest source of allergens after the bed.

Q: Will an encasing be uncomfortable to sleep on?
A: Today’s encasings offer the protection you need along with the total sleeping comfort found in the quality, high thread count cotton and polyester fabrics used in Allergy Control Products’ encasings.

Q: How can I be sure that encasing the bed will help my allergy symptoms?
A: Allergy Control® encasings have been used in major independent scientific studies, which tested various environmental and health benefits associated with encasing the bed. Thousands of allergy patients took part in the studies, and test results proved the effectiveness of encasings as part of an allergen avoidance plan. For a complete list of scientific studies that include Allergy Control encasings, see our website’s Allergy Learning Center.

Q: What other steps should be taken in the bedroom?
A: After encasing the bed, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) recommends washing sheets, blankets and other bedding weekly in hot water to kill dust mites. In addition, carpet in the bedroom should be treated or removed as carpet is the second largest source of allergens after the bed.

Learn What You Need to Know About Allergies in our New ALLERGY LEARNING CENTER
Visit www.AllergyControl.com to read the latest on allergies and allergy relief, connect with other allergy sufferers and get great educational tools for preventing your symptoms.

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