

# Animal Allergens and Asthma

## Additional History Questions to Supplement the History Form

- What type of furry pet(s) do you have (and how many of each)?
- Is it a strictly indoor pet? \_\_\_\_\_ outdoor? \_\_\_\_\_ indoor/outdoor? \_\_\_\_\_
- Does your child sleep with the pet?
- Has your child's asthma become worse since having the pet?
- If you moved your pet outdoors, did your child's asthma improve?
- If there is evidence of rodents in your home, how severe is the problem (mild, moderate, severe, very severe)
- Does your child's classroom (or other places he/she spends time) have a furry pet that he/she plays with?

## Possible Interventions:

Interventions with regard to pets should only be recommended if the child is allergic to the animal. Testing should therefore be done before making any recommendations. To reduce your child's exposure to animal allergens, the first two options below have been shown to be the most effective:

- **Consider finding a new home for indoor cats, dogs, and pet rodents**
- **At a minimum, keep pets outside**
- If neither of those are possible, the following may help reduce exposure:
  - Keep pets out of the child's bedroom
  - Encase mattresses and pillows
  - Remove carpets
  - Vacuum regularly using a cleaner with a HEPA filter or a double-layered microfilter bag (when the child is not around)
  - Use portable air cleaner with HEPA filter for child's bedroom
- **Avoid use of ozone generators and certain ionic air cleaners which can actually generate harmful ozone**
- Keep pets off furniture and out of cars
- Bathing cats and dogs has been shown to decrease these allergens, however, it must be done at least twice a week to be effective
- **If rats or mice have been observed, use the least toxic extermination method, such as traps and baits**
- **Also use methods listed for cockroach control (See Cockroach Allergen and Asthma fact sheet on page 22)**

## Follow-Up / Notes: