

Allergies to Pets

A person's allergic reactions to dogs or cats can vary, not only with the species and breed, but among individual animals within a breed.

If you are allergic to pets but wish to own one anyway, you may eventually find a breed that poses no health problem to you. However, keep in mind that allergies can develop long after you've adopted the animal. Also, there is no such thing as a hypoallergenic animal. Here are some tips on managing your allergies:

- Restrict a pet from access to your bedroom or confine it to a limited area of your home.
- Keep pets clean. However, avoid bathing the pet too frequently because that could cause skin problems. An alternative to bathing may be to regularly wipe your pet with a dampened cloth. Dry shampoos also can be effective in absorbing oils and odors.
- Keep your home well vacuumed and well ventilated.
- If your allergies are causing you serious medical problems, do not jeopardize your health. Call Tri-County Humane Society (320-252-0896) to rehome the animal. Placing your pet in another happy home will benefit everyone in the long run.

Source: "Canine and Feline Behavior Problems," Stefanie Schwartz