What are ALLERGIES?

An allergy is when the body’s defenses react to things in the environment like they are germs, when in reality they are not.

Symptoms of allergies include:

- Sneezing or nose congestion
- Coughing
- Itchy eyes, nose and throat
- Watery eyes
- Skin irritation

Allergies can also cause asthma. Symptoms of asthma include:

- Wheezing
- Coughing
- Lack of breath
- Chest pressure

ALLERGIES in the House?

Many household items can cause allergies and asthma:

- Dust mites
  - These are tiny bugs that are too small to see with your eyes. They live in mattresses, couches, pillows, rugs, upholstered furniture and stuffed animals.
- Mold
  - Grows in humid places.
- Pets
  - Especially pets like dogs and cats.
- Rats and cockroaches
  - They live any place they can find food and water.

PREVENTION

- Wash couch cushions, pillows, bedding, rugs and stuffed toys frequently.
- Use protective covers on couches for the dust and on mattresses.
- Clean mold with diluted bleach (1 tablespoon bleach for 1 quart (32 oz.) water) and open the windows when you clean.
- Keep the areas where your family sleeps free from pets, stuffed animals and rugs.
- Washed stuffed animals in hot water regularly.
- Block entry points to keep rats and cockroaches outside your house.
- Don’t leave food out uncovered.
- Store garbage in a garbage container with a lid.
- Fix leaks.
If you have a problems with rodents or other types of pests and need help, you can call the Asthma Action Line of the Department of Health at 1(877)ASTHMA-0.

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