



home of The Cat's Den

## News Release

### **Pet Lovers' Allergy Options**

*Pet owners would rather sniffle than switch*

**Toronto, ON—November 3, 2007**—Allergists report that 75-90 per cent of pet owners would rather put up with their allergies than give up their pets.

An estimated 15 per cent of us are allergic to animals: twice as many of us to cats as to dogs, but also to mice, rats, rabbits and horses. The number one allergen is dander, the dead skin cells shed by all warm-blooded pets. The other leading allergen is Fel d1, the cat allergen, a microscopic protein deposited on the cat's skin and fur coat by secretions from its sebaceous glands and from saliva during grooming. Because both allergens are airborne, they can trigger symptoms within minutes of entering a pet owner's home that can range from mildly itchy eyes to severe asthma. What's more they accumulate in the home and can linger for years, even after the pet has left.

Contrary to popular belief, there are no non-allergenic breeds. Whether short-haired, curly haired or hairless, all warm-blooded animals secrete these proteins. Some breeds produce less allergens than others, but even that varies with the individual animal.

So what's a pet lover to do?

1. Verify with a qualified allergist what exactly you are allergic to.
2. Keep your pet clean. Studies show bathing a cat monthly in plain water can reduce allergy reactions. Weekly bathing can reduce allergens on fur by as much as 84 per cent.
3. Keep your home clean. Vacuum with a HEPA or micro-filter; dust frequently, walls and ceilings, too; change furnace filters every 2-4 weeks; choose tile, wood or linoleum floors with throw rugs you can wash easily; wash furniture and window coverings frequently or choose non-fabric materials; try a high efficiency air cleaner.
4. Wash your hands after handling pets. Wear a good quality dust mask when you groom your pet and clean the litter bin, or if possible, delegate those jobs to someone else in the family.
5. Give your pet room to roam elsewhere, such as in a safe secure pet enclosure from Habitat Haven.
6. Set up a no-pet zone, preferably your bedroom, and keep it well-ventilated.

7. Limit your exposure to other allergens: dust, cigarette smoke, auto exhaust, food allergies.
8. Explore treatment options with a qualified allergist to minimize your symptoms.
9. Remember, children sometimes outgrow allergies. Moreover, studies show children exposed to indoor pets early in life were half as likely to develop common allergies later on.
10. If your symptoms are severe or life-threatening, try another type of pet: bird, fish or reptile.

Habitat Haven provides custom-designed pet enclosures that allow you to give your pet an active lifestyle in a restricted environment. Our sturdy modular units give pets room to roam at home, free from threat of predators, falls, or traffic. Easy-to-assemble, these habitats blend into your backyard, balcony, or indoor space, whether house, condo, apartment, workplace or cottage. They enable you to let your pet enjoy the best of both worlds: the comfort, safety and security of the indoors, and the freedom, fresh air and fun of the outdoors.

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Habitat Haven is home of The Cat's Den, founded in 2003 by president Kris Kischer. It provides pet owners across North America with solutions for a wholesome pet lifestyle: innovative pet enclosure systems and accessories. For product information or to order, call 1-866-484-0644, fax 1-416-466-0087, or visit us online at [www.habitathaven.com](http://www.habitathaven.com).

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