

# ASK OUR VETERINARIANS



**Dear Dr. Schmidt, I just found out that I'm allergic to my new cat Lily. We may need to re-home her. Are there any other options? Kristine**

Dear Kristine, Yes, there are options other than finding a new home for Lily. First of all, it may help to understand what you are really allergic to. Everyone says that we are allergic to cat "hair" or cat "dander". Well, what you are actually allergic to is the protein in your cat's saliva, urine that is on their fur and flakes of skin that become "dander" which is spread around your home for you to come into contact with. So, knowing that, you will want to cut down on the amount of Lily's fur and dander that you are exposed to. First of all, keep your house as clean as possible. Vacuum, vacuum, vacuum with a good vacuum cleaner that has a good filter. If possible, stick with solid flooring vs. carpeting, and use damp cleaning utensils to clean with. Also, keeping Lily out of your bedroom and off your bed will keep at least that room dander free. Another simple task would be to either bathe Lily weekly, or wipe her down with a damp cloth multiple times a week to get that saliva off her body. You should have someone else clean the litter box too (see, it's not all that bad!). And lastly, and probably most importantly, work with your allergist--they help you with grass and trees, ask them to help you with the cat you love too. Most all of them are also pet lovers, and are understanding and ready and willing to help you. So before you say good-bye to Lily, work with your allergist, and combined with the above suggestions, you might be pleasantly surprised how well you can live together and enjoy each other in all the years ahead.

Good Luck,

**Dr. Doug**



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