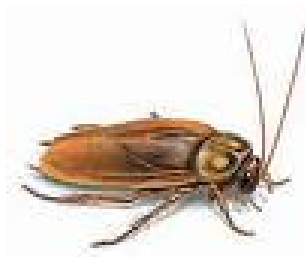


# Cockroaches & Asthma

## **Cockroaches Can Trigger Asthma**

Did you know that cockroaches may set off asthma attacks?



Tiny pieces of dead roaches and roach droppings end up in your house dust and in the air you breathe.

This is not good for your lungs and may lead to a stuffy nose, coughing, wheezing, and a feeling of tightness in your chest and shortness of breath.

But sprays and foggers used to kill roaches also have chemicals that may harm your health.

So before you spray, try these four steps to get rid of the roaches.

## **What You Can Do to Get Rid of Roaches**

Like humans, roaches need food and water and a place to live. Here are some tips to help keep your home roach-free.

1. Don't let them in:
  - Seal roach hiding places like cracks in walls, along baseboards, pipes, windows, and doors with caulk.
  - Put in or repair screens.
  - Check your grocery bags and boxes before you enter the house so you don't bring roaches home with you.
2. Keep them away from food:
  - Store food in containers with tight lids.
  - Eat only in certain places like the dining area or kitchen.
  - Clean up soon after eating and wash the dishes. If you have a pet, don't forget to clean the pet's dish too.
  - Tie up the top of plastic garbage bags and take trash out regularly.
3. Keep them away from water:
  - Repair leaky pipes and dripping faucets.
  - Clean up spills.
  - Wipe the sink and other places where water sits, like the dish racks, drip pans, and plant saucers.
4. Clear clutter:
  - Get rid of old newspapers and other material where roaches can hide.
  - Clean all rooms regularly. A vacuum cleaner can pick up roach body parts and droppings, but don't vacuum near people with asthma.
  - Mop the kitchen floor with soapy water and keep stoves, cabinets, and countertops clean.

If you live in an apartment or a multi-unit house you may want to ask your neighbors to work with you. Roaches from one home can easily crawl into another. Talk to the building manager or owner and by working together, you may be able to rid the entire building of these pests.

**Information from Facts about... Cockroaches and Asthma, American Lung Association, 2006.**

## **For More Information**

Hawaii Department of Health, [Hawaii State Asthma Control Program](#)  
601 Kamokila Blvd., Suite 344  
Kapolei, HI 96707  
Phone: (808) 692-7476  
Fax: (808) 692-7461

