

# HOW TO CLEAN MATTRESSES

WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME YOU CLEANED YOUR MATTRESS?  
..... LAST YEAR? .....NEVER?

PEOPLE SPEND, ON AVERAGE, A THIRD OF THEIR LIVES IN BED SLEEPING. AND NO DOUBT WE'RE ALL SPENDING MORE TIME HANGING OUT IN BED BINGE WATCHING NETFLIX AND DISNEY+ IN THE ERA OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC. MATTRESSES CAN HARBOR DUST MITES, DEAD SKIN, HAIR, DIRT, CRUMBS, AND OTHER DEBRIS, WHICH MEANS THEY NEED TO BE CLEANED REGULARLY – PARTICULARLY IF YOU SUFFER FROM ASTHMA OR ALLERGIES, HAVE SMALL CHILDREN, FURRY FRIENDS, OR ARE JUST AN AVID MIDNIGHT SNACKER.

BEFORE WE GET TO DEEP CLEANING, LET'S TALK ABOUT SOME THINGS THAT CAN HANG OUT IN YOUR MATTRESS AND BEDDING.

**SPOILER ALERT:** YOUR BED HAS ITS OWN ECOSYSTEM. SWEET DREAMS!

## DEAD SKIN CELLS

Humans shed between 30,000 and 40,000 skin cells every day (that's enough to fill a teaspoon), according to the [American Academy of Dermatology \(AAD\)](#) – and many of these slough off while you're rolling around in bed. All those dead skin cells pile up in bedding and work their way deep into your mattress.

## DUST MITES



Where skin cells lead, dust mites will follow. Brace yourself: your mattress could contain anywhere from 100,000 to 10 million dust mites. These microscopic creatures are virtually impossible to see with the naked eye and survive by eating your dead skin cells. Therefore, dust mites are prevalent wherever humans live. Their feces contains a substance called Der P 1, a very potent allergen. People who are allergic to dust mites may suffer from an asthma attack, eye irritation, headaches, eczema, or chronic sinus problems. Dust mites will live in even the cleanest of homes.

Mattresses and bedding provide the ideal conditions for these tiny creatures because shed skin flakes and perspiration provide an ideal source of food and humidity. Their legs contain tiny barbs that can hold on to fibers making them hard to remove by normal vacuuming so take your time and do a thorough job. Hot water extraction with a “rinse & vac” works well and has the benefit of reducing more allergen as the allergen is water soluble. Also adding a miticide will help to keep them from coming back. Dust mites also thrive in places with high humidity, so make sure you allow plenty of time for thorough drying. A fan will help speed up your drying time.

## PET DANDER



Millions of people let their cats and dogs sleep in bed with them. But pesky pet dander can cause serious allergies symptoms. It's important to note that pet dander is not from the *hair* of the animal, but rather the dander produced by the skin. Even a non-shedding pet produces dander, so the sad truth is that there is no such thing as a completely non-allergenic breed of cat or dog. However, it is true that some breeds of cats or dogs produce more allergenic dander than others. These particles are very tiny, even much smaller than dust mites or pollen grains, so they remain suspended in the air for long periods of time. Dander allergens are sticky, and dander in soft materials, such as mattresses, bedding, upholstered furniture, carpets, and clothing, can persist for long periods of time. Unless special steps are taken, pet dander can remain in a home for up to six months after the pet has been removed.

## BODILY FLUIDS

Then there's the amount of moisture you can leak all over your sheets as you sleep. We're talking drool, oils from your skin, and sweat. It's not uncommon to sweat during the night. You may sweat a little or a lot, depending on how warm your room is, many blankets you sleep with, and even what you ate before going to bed. A range of illnesses and hormonal conditions, including menopause, can also contribute to excessive nighttime sweating. Feeling anxious or stressed, having nightmares, or drinking alcohol can also cause you to sweat excessively at night. A mattress protector is a great way to help protect your mattress from the excess of bodily fluids that soak into bedding at night.

In addition to bodily fluids, dust, dirt, hair, and even fecal matter can be lingering in your bedding and mattress.

## CLEANING SUPPLIES

Don't worry, there's no need to go out and buy a new mattress. All of these things can be eradicated with proper methods. But before we get to that, let's talk supplies. To properly deep clean your mattress and bedding, you'll need:

- Anti-allergen laundry detergent (like [The Ecology Works](#))
- A HEPA vacuum with an upholstery attachment (adding a hot water "steam vac" will do an even better job)
- White cleaning cloths or paper towels
- Vital Oxide or Vitula Biocide

## REMOVE & WASH BEDDING



Start by removing your pillows, comforter, sheets, and mattress protector. Use this as an opportunity to deep clean all of those pieces as well. Wash your bedding in hot water with a fragrance-free anti-allergen laundry detergent. After you've removed your pillow cases and put them in the washer, spray your bed pillows and decorative throw pillows with Vital Oxide or Vitula Biocide to eliminate allergens. Let your pillows air dry while your bedding is in the washer.

## VACUUM



Next, use a HEPA type vacuum with an upholstery attachment, and vacuum your entire mattress, including all the sides and little nooks and crannies. Among other things, dead skin cells can accumulate on your mattress. Vacuum your mattress starting in one corner. Make sure to move your vacuum back forth a bit to pull out any dead skin cells or dirt.

## BANISH ODORS

Forget the old school method of sprinkling a few boxes of baking soda onto your mattress to remove odors. FYI, for baking soda to effectively lift and eradicate odors, it needs to sit for at least 24 hours. And then after waiting a whole day, you'll have to vacuum up that powdery, pasty mess. There's a better way. Deodorize your mattress by simply spraying it with Vital Oxide or Vitula Biocide and letting it air dry.

## HOW OFTEN SHOULD I DEEP CLEAN MY MATTRESS & WASH MY BEDDING?



You should clean your mattress about every six months. Bedding should be washed at least once a week in hot water with a fragrance-free anti-allergen detergent. However, if you or a loved one gets sick with COVID-19, the flu, or another serious illness, it's a good idea to give the mattress a deep clean and wash the bedding as soon as their symptoms have passed and they are no longer contagious.

For regular maintenance, making your bed daily is an excellent idea. As you make your bed, tiny dry particles your bedding has accumulated fall to the floor. Then it's a job left to your vacuum.

## HOW CAN I REMOVE MATTRESS STAINS?



Accidents happen. And if you have little ones, they might happen a lot. Bedwetting and diaper leaks are not uncommon so it's good to have a cleaning strategy in place. Whether it's urine, vomit, or feces, Vital Oxide and Vitula Biocide have the cleaning power to eradicate foul-smelling odors and stubborn stains. First, you'll want to remove all bedding and get it into the washer right away. Next, clean up as much excess waste as possible. That means soaking up whatever urine you can with a dry rag or paper towels, and/or removing any solid matter from the surface of the mattress. Do this

as soon as you can; if the stain is allowed to sit for too long, it may saturate or settle into the mattress and become more difficult to get out. Blot up as much of the liquid as you can, being careful to not rub it in. Then, rinse the area with a little bit of hot water to dilute the remaining mess. Repeat the first step to blot up as much of the mess and water as possible. Finally, spray Vital Oxide or Vitula Biocide on the area to eliminate odors and stains. Be sure to use enough of the formula to penetrate the mattress fibers and all areas the mess may have penetrated and simply let air dry. A fan can be used to dry the mattress faster if needed. Vital Oxide and Vitula Biocide are proven to remove the strongest, most deep-set odors and stains.

## IS VITAL OXIDE AND VITULA BIOCIDES SAFE TO USE ON MY MATTRESS?

Yes! Vital Oxide and Vitula Biocide can be used on virtually any surface that needs to be cleaned or disinfected. It works great on mattresses, bedding, countertops, floors, sneakers, sofas, or anything really. It's free from harsh chemicals and fumes, non-corrosive, and is gentle on surfaces. Vital Oxide and Vitula Biocide are safe for use around the whole family.

