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House dust mites

Use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for successful pest management.

Biology

House dust mites are extremely small (up to 0.5 mm) and can be found as a component of house dust. They are principally found in cotton-stuffed mattresses and furniture, although they can also be found on birds, in bird nests, on animals and on humans. These light creamed-colored mites feed primarily on human skin cells that have sloughed off and pet dander. They do not bite. House dust mites contain potent allergens that may cause allergic reactions of the respiratory tract in a very small percentage of people.

Management Options

Non-Chemical Management

~ Practice good sanitation.
~ Vacuum mattresses, furniture and floors. Keep cracks and crevices where dust mites hide clean.
~ Wash bedding regularly in hot water.
~ Lower humidity in the house, as house dust mites prefer humid environments.
~ Use special bedding encasements to help protect the top layer of the mattress where mites feed.
~ Select appropriate furnishings.
~ Eliminate dust from the home.

Select non-chemical management options as your first choice!

Chemical Management

IMPORTANT: Visit Home and Garden Fact Sheets for more information on using pesticides

None recommended.

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Images

~ Caption: Dust mite
~ Photo by: Wharton, 1970