

asthma & allergy friendly™

Certification Program

CERTIFIED
asthma & allergy
friendly™

Meets
Certification
Standards



Asthma and Allergy
Foundation of America
www.aafa.org

The concerned consumer is rarely provided with sufficient information specific to allergy and asthma that allows them to make an informed purchase decision. The **asthma & allergy friendly™** Certification Program will fill this information gap for consumers and will act as a lifestyle choice focusing on health and enabling the consumer to make decisions to create a healthier home environment. When you see the **asthma & allergy friendly™** Certification Mark on a product you know that it has been scientifically tested and proven to be more suitable for individuals with asthma and related allergic sensitivities. The presence of this Certification Mark on products will help empower the consumer to make informed purchase choices. The **asthma & allergy friendly™** Certification Program is operated by the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) and Allergy Standards Limited (ASL).

For more information on the **asthma & allergy friendly™** Certification Program or to see a complete listing of the certified products, please visit:

www.asthmaandallergyfriendly.com

The **asthma & allergy friendly™** Certification Program applies to a wide range of products including:

- Toys
- Vacuum Cleaners
- Pillows
- Comforters and Mattress Protectors
- Bedding Protectors and Encasings
- Mattress Pads
- Flooring
- Washing Machines
- Air Cleaners

asthma & allergy friendly™ Certification Mark

Asthma and Allergies in America

The prevalence of asthma and allergies is growing every year in the USA. There are over 50 million Americans with allergies and 20 million with asthma. This is 1 out of every 4 Americans and nearly 70% of households being affected. Asthma and allergy symptoms are caused or worsened by "triggers". These triggers are normally allergens or irritants in the home that can cause asthma or allergy symptoms. The most common indoor triggers include; dust mites, pet dander, cockroaches, mold and other volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

Physicians strongly recommend that individuals with asthma and allergies avoid these triggers and go even further by recommending that they actively seek to decrease the levels of allergens and irritants in the home.

There are various products and cleaning techniques that can help individuals decrease these triggers and live in a healthier home. A real problem for consumers is recognizing the most suitable products for them at the point of purchase.

Why Certify Products as asthma & allergy friendly™?

There is a lot of confusion in the market place when it comes to products targeted at the asthma and allergy market. It is estimated that Americans spend over \$10 billion annually on such products including vacuum cleaners, air filtration devices, bedding, barriers, flooring and toys. Many of these products bear claims regarding suitability for asthma sufferers but most are not substantiated with testing. The allergen-avoidance market is ever enlarging but "currently there is little or no regulation governing claims".*

All **asthma & allergy friendly™** certified products have been independently tested by ASL and shown to meet the **asthma & allergy friendly™** standards which have been adopted by AAFA.

*Source: Report of the Third International Workshop. JACI vol. 100: no.6, part 1.

Testing and Certification

The **asthma & allergy friendly™** certification process utilizes an algorithm of proprietary and recognized scientific techniques to test products to the specified standards. Manufacturers must submit multiple product samples to be independently tested by ASL.

- **Vacuum Cleaners** should be able to reduce the total allergen burden of surfaces and in doing so should not generate airborne allergen above certification limits.

- **Bedding** should contain fabrics that provide an adequate barrier to the passage of house hold allergen; should not contain allergenic or irritant chemicals and should be of sufficient quality to withstand repeated washing.
- **Stuffed Toys** should not contain allergenic or irritant chemicals and should be able to withstand regular eradication techniques necessary to achieve low levels of allergen.
- **Fabrics** including those used in stuffed toys and bedding, are tested to the most stringent international standards for dyes, finishes, VOCs and other irritant or allergenic chemicals. Fabrics should not contain azo dyes or sensitising disperse dyes and biocides/pesticides should also not be detected.
- **Floor coverings** should have a low capacity for allergen retention when proper cleaning instructions are followed; during cleaning, airborne allergen levels should be minimised and the floor covering should not exceed certification thresholds for VOCs and other irritant chemicals such as formaldehyde.
- **Washing Machines** should be miticidal and reduce the allergen burden of the item being washed to below certification levels.
- **Air Cleaners** should reduce airborne allergen burden below certification levels by filter capture and not simply redistribution; emission levels should not exceed certification criteria.

All certified product are randomly audited for compliance to the standard. ASL carefully monitors product development in the various industry sectors and standards are reviewed annually and amended as necessary to advances in technology.

Benefits for Consumers & Patients

- Able to identify more suitable products
- Encourages trigger reduction strategies
- Improves ability to follow Doctor's advice
- Promotes the message of allergen avoidance
- Encourages a healthier home with improved indoor air quality
- Manufacturers encouraged to produce better products
- Access to educational material with products

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