

asthma & allergy friendly™

Certification Program

CERTIFIED
asthma & allergy
friendly™

Meets
Certification
Standards



Asthma Society
of Canada

Asthma.ca™

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

www.asthmaandallergyfriendly.ca

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 Society of Canada (ASC) and Allergy Standards Limited (ASL).

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

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

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Certification Mark

Asthma and Allergies in Canada

The prevalence of asthma and allergies is growing every year in Canada with 1 out of every 4 Canadians 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 Canadians spend over \$1 billion annually on such products including vacuum cleaners, air filtration devices, bedding, barriers, flooring, toys and washing machines. Many of these products bear claims regarding suitability for asthma and allergy 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 ASC.

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

Testing and Certification

ASC contact:

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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.

For example, bedding items are subjected to both physical and chemical testing to ensure that they do not have properties that are likely to irritate both asthma and allergy symptoms in susceptible people. The outer encasing of the bedding item must provide an effective barrier to the passage of allergen while also remaining "breathable" in order to ensure user comfort. Vacuum cleaners are assessed for their ability to remove allergen from flooring surfaces as well as allergen emission during use. Washing machines are assessed to evaluate their miticidal impact and ability to reduce allergen from test items. Product samples that meet the standard are granted **asthma & allergy friendly™** certification thus empowering the concerned consumer to make informed purchases decisions.

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 reflect advances in technology.

Benefits for 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

ASL contact:

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