

Surviving Home Remodeling with Allergies

The National Association of the Remodeling Industry (NARI) “The Voice of the Remodeling Industry™” is providing tips to homeowners on how to prevent a remodeling project from becoming an allergenic nightmare, since it is estimated that 36 million Americans have allergies.

Dust and mites are stirred up in the air, and are the two main causes of allergic reactions during a remodeling project. Aside from allergens, there are also some extremely dangerous materials such as asbestos and lead paint that can be harmful to anyone who comes in contact with it. In such cases, NARI highly recommends having a professional remove potentially harmful materials.

Following these tips from NARI can reduce the chances of an allergic family member with allergies falling victim to allergens during a home remodeling project. Preparations can be made in the home that will cut allergic reactions to a minimum, including:

- Inform your remodeling contractor during your first meeting about any allergies.
- Seal off the area to be remodeled with plastic sheets; leave plastic sheeting up until cleanup from the job is complete. When sheeting is removed and discarded, avoid carrying it through the home.
- Close all vents in the room being remodeled so that dust won't travel through the air ducts.
- Open windows in the room being remodeled at least a crack and set up a fan to exhaust air towards the outside.
- Keep family pets out of the work area. They can track dust and mites all over the house.
- Vacuum and sweep daily to prevent dust from spreading.
- Change your furnace filter often since it will pick up more particles than usual.
- Plan for removing debris. Using a chute out the window is ideal since it will eliminate the possibility of tracking materials through the house.

If you are having a new floor put in, consider using a hard floor such as wood, ceramic or slate instead of carpeting. Carpeting is an ideal home for dust mites, which is a leading cause of allergies in the home. Before making a decision, talk to your remodeling contractor for recommendations. Be sure if you choose hardwood floors, to discuss the effects of fumes that may be emitted when furnishing a new hard floor. Consider staying out of the home for a couple days to let it properly air out after installing a floor.