

Purina Veterinarian Debunks the Biggest Myths About Cat Allergens

Purina veterinarian Dr. RuthAnn Lobos, who still works shifts in clinics, shares the cat allergen myths she hears from clients every week — and the science-backed step most cat owners overlook

ST. LOUIS, Aug. 19, 2026 [/PRNewswire/](#) -- Dr. RuthAnn Lobos spends most of her time as a senior veterinarian for Purina. But she still works shifts in the exam room as a practicing relief veterinarian. There, she says, the same handful of misconceptions about cat allergens comes up again and again.

"By the time a client brings it up, they've usually already tried something that didn't work, or they're bracing to give up the cat entirely," Lobos says. "Most of the time, the plan they're working from is based on a myth."

More than one in five adults are sensitive to cat allergens.¹ Confusion about the real cause sends many owners down paths that don't help. Some cat owners give up their cat unnecessarily as a result.

AT A GLANCE

- Cat allergen sensitivity is caused by a protein called Fel d 1, found in cat saliva — not by fur or breed.
- No cat breed is truly free of the allergen; "hypoallergenic" breeds still produce it.
- Bathing and shaving offer only temporary, partial relief because they don't address the source. The same goes for deep cleaning your house.
- Purina Pro Plan LiveClear is clinically proven to reduce the major allergen in cat hair and dander in as little as three weeks of daily feeding.
- Purina Pro Plan is veterinary-recommended and backed by board-certified veterinary nutritionists.

Myth: Certain breeds are "hypoallergenic"

Hairless and low-shedding breeds are frequently marketed as allergen-friendly. Lobos hears this one constantly. "Every cat, regardless of breed, hair length, age or sex, produces the allergen that causes most reactions," she says. That allergen, Fel d 1, is present in a cat's saliva. It has nothing to do with fur type. A hairless cat can carry just as much of it as a longhaired one.

Myth: Shaving or bathing the cat solves the problem

"Clients tell me they've tried frequent baths, or even shaved the cat down," Lobos says. "They think less hair means less allergen exposure. It can help marginally and temporarily, but it doesn't address where the allergen actually comes from." Fel d 1 is produced in saliva and spread through normal grooming. It returns as soon as the cat grooms itself again. For most cats, that happens within hours.

Myth: Constant cleaning removes cat allergens

"Some owners try to clean their way out of it," Lobos says. Frequent vacuuming and washing bedding can reduce buildup somewhat. But it doesn't address the source. Fel d 1 is continuously re-deposited through normal grooming, not just accumulated dust.

Myth: Rehoming the cat is the only real fix

"Owners come in already having decided the cat has to go," she says. "Every option they've tried has

failed. That's usually the moment I wish we'd started the conversation sooner." Removing the cat from the home does eliminate exposure. But Lobos points out something important. Most owners haven't yet tried addressing the allergen at its source. Instead, they've only managed it after the fact.

What actually helps

Lobos points to a source-level approach. The goal is to neutralize Fel d 1 before it ever leaves the cat's mouth. Pro Plan LiveClear uses an egg-based protein to bind and neutralize the allergen in the cat's mouth during normal eating. Clinical feeding trials confirm a measurable reduction. The major allergen in cat hair and dander drops by an average of 47 percent, starting in the third week of daily feeding.

The reduction in Fel d 1 doesn't come at the expense of nutrition. Pro Plan LiveClear formulas meet AAFCO (Association of American Feed Control Officials) standards for complete and balanced nutrition, like the rest of the Pro Plan line. Purina scientist Dr. Ebenezer Satyaraj led the research behind the science that makes LiveClear work. Real chicken, turkey, or salmon comes first on the ingredient list. High-protein recipes support lean muscle. Probiotics aid digestive health. Omega-3 fatty acids care for skin and coat. Pro Plan LiveClear comes in several different formulations:

- Chicken and Rice (Adult): High-protein kibble, including real chicken as the first ingredient, for muscle and immune support.
- Salmon and Rice (Adult): Features real salmon first plus omega fatty acids for skin and coat care.
- Turkey and Rice (Indoor): 10% less fat than LiveClear Chicken and Rice Formula tailored for indoor cats.
- Turkey and Oatmeal (Sensitive Skin & Stomach): Formulated for digestive and skin sensitivities.
- Chicken and Rice (Kitten): Nutrient-dense for cats under one year old, supporting growing bones and brains.
- Chicken and Rice (Adult 7+ Prime Plus): Recipe tailored with antioxidants and vital nutrients for cats aged 7 and older.
- Chicken and Rice (Adult Weight Management): High Protein recipe promotes muscle mass maintenance with 20 percent less fat than Pro Plan LiveClear Cat Food Chicken and Rice Formula.

"It's not a replacement for every strategy owners use to manage cat allergens," Lobos says, "but it's the piece most owners never knew existed — something that's science-backed and works on the allergen itself, instead of just cleaning up after it."

Common questions about managing cat allergens

- *Can cat food reduce allergens in cats?* Yes — Pro Plan LiveClear is clinically formulated to neutralize Fel d 1, the major allergen in cat saliva, hair and dander, when fed daily.
- *How long does it take to see a reduction in Fel d 1?* Clinical feeding trials show the major allergen in cat hair and dander drops by an average of 47 percent, starting in the third week of daily feeding.
- *Does breed affect how much allergen a cat produces?* No. Peer-reviewed research confirms all cats produce Fel d 1 regardless of breed, hair length, age, sex or body weight.²

For more information, visit purina.com/liveclear.

About Purina

Nestlé Purina PetCare creates richer lives for pets and the people who love them. Founded in 1894, Purina has helped dogs and cats live longer, healthier lives by offering scientifically based nutritional innovations.

Purina manufactures some of the world's most trusted and popular pet care products, including Purina ONE, Pro Plan, Friskies and Tidy Cats. Our more than 11,000 U.S. associates take pride in our trusted pet

food, treat and litter brands that feed 46 million dogs and 68 million cats every year. Nearly 500 Purina scientists, veterinarians, and pet care experts ensure our commitment to unsurpassed quality and nutrition.

Over the past five years, Purina has contributed more than \$150 million towards organizations that bring, and keep, people and pets together, as well as those that help our communities and environment thrive.

Purina is part of Nestlé, a global leader in Nutrition, Health and Wellness. For more information, visit [purina.com](https://www.purina.com) or [subscribe here](#) to get the latest Purina news.

About Purina Pro Plan

Purina Pro Plan is a leader in the advanced nutrition category, with more than 140 targeted formulas to help your pet thrive throughout every stage of life. For more information, visit www.proplan.com or follow @ProPlan on [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#).

¹ Purina Institute. (n.d.). Neutralizing allergens: Fact vs. fiction. Purina Institute.
<https://www.purinainstitute.com/science-of-nutrition/neutralizing-allergens/fact-vs-fiction>

² Satyaraj, E., Gardner, C., Filipi, I., Cramer, K., & Sherrill, S. (2019). Keep the cat, change the care pathway: A transformational approach to managing Fel d 1, the major cat allergen. *Allergy*, 74(Suppl. 107), 5–17.

SOURCE Purina Pro Plan
