

14

Mite allergies and bug bites **DSE**Level: 

Let's think!

1. How do you prevent bug bites?
2. What will you do if you get bug bites?

PLAYLIST



READ ALONG



Text 1

A guide to mite allergies

How do you know if you are allergic to mites?

- 1** Mites are tiny creatures. They commonly live in house dust. It is reported that most people coexist with them. Some people have allergic reactions to these tiny bugs. These allergies can range from mild to severe. If you have an itchy rash, you can go to the nearest clinic. But if you vomit and have chest pain, you should go to hospital.



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What are mites?

- 2** Common mites include house dust mites, storage mites and parasitic mites. The first two types are the major causes of allergies. A study conducted by The Chinese University of Hong Kong found that more than half of Hong Kong residents suffer from allergies, and house dust mites account for about 50 percent of the cases.

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What are the symptoms of mite allergies?

- 3** If you are allergic to mites, you may sneeze, cough, feel itchy or have watery eyes. It is possible to experience life-threatening symptoms such as shortness of breath, swelling of the throat and dizziness. Sometimes, it can even cause death.
- 4** Many people confuse mite allergies with tick bites. In fact, their symptoms are different. For tick bites, common signs include red rash marks on the skin, inflamed small bumps, and swollen or blistered skin near the bites. They can be itchy, irritating and painful.



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How to prevent mite allergies?

- 5** You cannot completely eliminate mites from your home. However, by regularly vacuuming and dusting, their effects could be reduced. Wash your bed sheets, pillowcases and clothing in hot water. Use a dehumidifier to reduce indoor humidity. All these can help.

How to treat mite allergies?

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- G** 6 You can treat mild itching with anti-itch cream or anti-inflammatory drugs. The itching will be relieved after applying them. To avoid the risk of infection, do not scratch your skin.
- G** You might contact a doctor if you experience signs of infection, including fever, chills, and difficulty breathing.

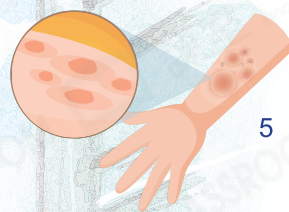
~320 words

Text 2

Bug bites

Benjamin Bruce

There lie dozens of red hills underneath my pyjamas.
 My skin looks like a map of the Bahamas.
 The itch has been tickling and prickling.
 I just cannot stop wiggling.



5

All night long the tiny devils do their tricks.
 I suffer the unbearable itch as the clock ticks.
 Scratching helplessly,
 On dusty linen I sleep restlessly.

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My blood starts to make fresh stains.
 A clean home is the best cure, the doctor explains.
 According to the health and science column,
 I am my own biggest problem!



~90 words

Looking into Grammar

- We use the modal verbs *can* and *could* to express possibilities.
 - We use the modal verb *should* to give advice.
 - We use the modal verb *will* to talk about certainties in the future.
 - We use the modal verb *might* to make suggestions in a polite manner.
 - Modal verbs are followed by a verb in its base form.
- ✓ ... you *can* (~~*will*~~) go to the nearest clinic.
- ✓ ... you *should* (~~*will*~~) go to hospital.
- ✓ ... their effects *could* (~~*might*~~) be reduced.
- ✓ The itching *will* (~~*should*~~) be relieved after applying the cream or drugs.
- ✓ You *might* (~~*will*~~) contact a doctor if you experience signs of infection.

? Underline a verb used with a modal verb in paragraph 6 of Text 1.

Read Text 1 and answer questions 1–8. For multiple-choice questions, choose the best answer and blacken ONE circle only. (16 marks)

1. What does 'them' (line 4) refer to? _____

2. Which THREE examples of allergic reactions are mentioned in paragraph 1?

3. According to paragraphs 1–2, which of the following is TRUE?
- A. Mites live in outdoor places.
 - B. Few homes have mites in them.
 - C. More than half of Hong Kong people are allergic to house dust mites. A B C D
 - D. Over half of Hong Kong people have at least one allergy.

4. Find a word in paragraph 3 which suggests that allergy symptoms can be very serious.

5. Based on the information in paragraphs 3–4, complete the summary by writing ONE word to fill in each blank. Make sure your answers are grammatically correct.

When you experience a severe allergic reaction to mites, you may have trouble (i) _____, feel (ii) _____ and have a swollen (iii) _____. However, if you have tick bites, the symptoms are different. The bitten bumps may become (iv) _____, causing you to feel an itchy and (v) _____ pain.

6. According to paragraphs 5–6, which of the following is NOT true?
- A. It is possible to make your home mite-free.
 - B. Washing bedding in hot water can help reduce mites.
 - C. Scratching can make the problem worse. A B C D
 - D. Fever is one sign of infection.

6 To get the correct answer, locate false statements or statements that are not mentioned in the paragraphs.

7. Complete the summary by filling in each blank with ONE word taken from paragraphs 5–6.

The number of mites can be (i) _____ by keeping your house clean. Remember to keep (ii) _____ in check, as mites like high moisture levels. If you suffer from skin allergies, you can go to your doctor for an (iii) _____ cream. (iv) _____ scratching itchy areas to prevent any (v) _____.

8. What is the purpose of this informational guide?
- A. to persuade readers to keep their houses clean
- B. to present new research on mite allergies
- C. to describe how allergic reactions can cause harm
- D. to educate the public about mite allergies

8 Scan the subheadings and topic sentences for clues.

- A B C D
-

Read Text 2 and answer questions 9–16. For multiple-choice questions, choose the best answer and blacken ONE circle only. (9 marks)

9. Where does the poem take place according to stanzas 1–2?

10. When does the poem take place?

11. How does the poet describe his skin condition?

The poet compares his rashes to (i) _____ and
(ii) _____.

12. What causes the poet to move a lot?

13. What does 'tiny devils' (line 7) refer to?

- A. pyjamas
- B. bugs
- C. red hills
- D. tricks

- A B C D
-

-  14. According to stanza 3, which of the following is NOT true?

- A. The poet has a bleeding rash.
- B. The poet knows how to improve his skin condition.
- C. The poet keeps his home clean.
- D. The poet gets advice from a doctor.

- A B C D
-

15. Why does the poet think he is his 'own biggest problem' (line 14)?

16. Read the poem. Find a word that describes the poet's home.

Vocabulary

GLOSSARY



A. Complete the conversation below with the given words. Make sure your answers are grammatically correct.

Adjective: allergic irritating life-threatening severe unbearable

Noun: cure humidity symptom

Verb: prickle wiggle

Comforting a little itchy butterfly

Grace: Mum, I can't sleep.

Mum: What's the matter, Grace?

Grace: My arms are itching. It's just (1) _____ at first. But now, it has become (2) _____!

Mum: I'm sorry, darling. I'm sure the itching will go away soon.

Grace: But my arms (3) _____, and I had to (4) _____ left and right in bed to make the bites feel less itchy!

Mum: Don't worry, my dear. You're just (5) _____ to mosquito bites. The (6) _____ will disappear in a couple of days.

Grace: I'm scared. Mosquitoes can spread diseases and some of them are (7) _____!

Mum: No, silly, you won't die from getting bitten by a mosquito. There's no (8) _____ for your allergy, but there are ways to prevent this from happening again. Dad will get rid of the water under the flower pots tomorrow. That'll lower the (9) _____ in the house, and there'll be fewer mosquitoes.

Grace: I hope so. I hate not being able to sleep.

Mum: Let me rub some cream on your arms. Your itch should be less (10) _____ right away.

Grace: Thanks, Mum.

Mum: That's what I'm here for, to make you feel better.



- B. Complete the infographic below with the given words. Make sure your answers are grammatically correct.

Words related to snake bites

ambulance

blurred vision

bruising

dizziness

fang

severe

venom

vomiting

Cobra bites are extremely dangerous. Cobras have (1) _____ that can deliver (2) _____ directly into a person's bloodstream. Within a few minutes of being bitten, the victim will usually experience (3) _____ pain at the site of the bite. Below are some common symptoms to look out for.



(4) _____



Cobra bites



(5) _____



(6) _____

If you are bitten by a cobra, seek medical attention right away. Call a / an (8) _____ as soon as possible!



(7) _____

Writing

Write a complaint letter to the property management office regarding the mosquito problem in your housing estate.

Write about 150 words.