

How to Lick Cat Allergies

Student Comprehension Worksheet

Directions: After reading "[How to lick cat allergies](#)," answer the following questions.

- 1. How many people are allergic to cats? How does that compare to the number of people with airborne allergens?**
- 2. What protein triggers cat allergies in people? What genes are responsible for making the protein?**
- 3. Do scientists know the protein's role in cats? What evidence do scientists have that might suggest a possible function of the protein?**
- 4. What does finding a version of the protein in lions indicate to scientists about its importance?**
- 5. Describe one approach currently used to treat people who are allergic to cats. What are some drawbacks of the treatment?**
- 6. Describe one approach to treat people who are allergic to cats that is still in testing. What are the advantages and drawbacks of that potential approach?**
- 7. Based on the graph titled "Cat food's effects on allergen levels," what is the baseline level of active Fel d1 in cat fur (be sure to include units and define "baseline" levels in your answer)? What does early evidence suggest about a treatment approach that relies on cat food?**

8. What does the graph titled “Total nasal symptom score” show (be sure to define the x- and y-axes and their units)? How does the experimental allergy shot compare with the placebo at 29 days after the injection (be sure to explain what a negative percentage indicates)?

9. What does it mean for a cat to be hypoallergenic? Why is this a goal for some researchers?

10. Why does breeder Tom Lundberg advise people who need low-allergen cats to get potential pets tested and meet them in person?

11. What tool is Indoor Biotechnologies using to eliminate Fel d1 in cats and how does it work? Do researchers know whether the approach will be harmful to cats? Explain.

12. Why might the techniques described for alleviating cat allergies also work for people with other airborne allergies? Give an example.