

# **A review of the bio-hazards presented by dust mites in older mattresses**

By Duncan Bain PhD

## **Executive Summary**

House dust mites are positively linked to numerous allergic health problems. Mites are especially prevalent in mattresses.

Older mattresses can be shown to have higher dust mite populations than new mattresses, especially in damp environments.

The antigens contained in the mite faeces may continue to build up even if the mite population is stable.

Control of mites is probably best achieved by an integral approach combining enclosure of the mattress in an occlusive cover, cleaning, and certainly periodical mattress replacement.

**In the Author's opinion extended guarantees and prolonged replacement cycles for mattresses (up to 20 years in some cases) are a cause for concern and the standard industry recommendation of 7 years combined with improved consumer education with regard to hygiene and inimical environment (to dust mites) maintenance is prudent.**