

## Pets may prevent allergies

Recently, doctors have concluded that the very clean environments we try to achieve for babies and young children may leave them susceptible to allergies as they grow older.

Now, doctors at Ford Hospital in Detroit say their 10-year study shows that kids who were regularly exposed to pets during their first year of life (when the immune system is still developing) are less likely to be allergic to grass, dust, and mold, as well as to dogs and cats.

The doctors theorize that exposure to animals' bacteria helps children lower their susceptibility to allergens. Though allergies run in families, even kids whose parents had them were less likely to be allergic themselves if there was a pet in the home