

## Can CRISPR gene editing give us an allergy-free cat?

If you're among the 10% of people who are allergic to cats, you can blame a protein found in cat saliva and skin. The pesky protein spreads when cats groom themselves and shed their hair and dander around the home.

Scientists and immunologists have been interested in this protein, known as Fel d 1, for decades because of its role in cat allergies. If they could figure out a way to stop cats from producing this protein, they could put an end to the sneezing, wheezing, and sniffing once and for all. Currently, the options for would-be cat owners with allergies are limited: Certain breeds of cats deemed "hypoallergenic" are not completely allergen-free, and allergy shots aren't effective for many people.

But the gene-editing tool CRISPR has opened up new possibilities for the future of hypoallergenic cats. Scientists at one Virginia company, Indoor Biotechnologies, have [successfully used CRISPR](#) to delete the gene that tells the body how to make Fel d 1. Not to worry — no animals were harmed in the process. The team experimented on feline cells, not live cats, but the researchers say the method shows promise for real pets.

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