

Lookout! Truth about Allerca Hypoallergenic Cats

In a lead story on July 17, 2013, ABC's 'The Lookout' reported the results of its investigation of [Allerca GD](#) or [LIFESTYLE PETS](#) hypoallergenic cats. These cats are marketed online to cat allergic patients at prices of \$7000-28,000 US. Allerca claims that the allergen (Fel d 1) produced by these cats has a "naturally occurring mutation" that reduces their allergenicity and enables the cats to be tolerated by allergic patients.

Doubts about Allerca's claims were raised in 2008 and 2010 by articles published in The Scientist magazine (see links below). ABC's 'The Lookout' interviewed one Allerca customer who sent a \$4000 check for a cat in 2009 but never received a cat. The customer could not locate Simon Brodie, the owner of Allerca (www.allercascam.blogspot.com) to get a refund. Similar reports can be found on the internet by Googling "Allerca".

'The Lookout' sent saliva and or fur samples from Allerca cats, Savannah cats and ASPCA cats (regular cats from an animal shelter) to Indoor Biotechnologies for analysis. The samples were obtained by a veterinarian and were tested by Indoor Biotechnologies for Fel d 1 and for reactivity with allergic (IgE) antibodies from cat allergic patients.

As described by Dr. Eva King (Head of the Immunoassay Group, Indoor Biotechnologies) on ABC's 'The Lookout', the Allerca cats produced Fel d 1 and the Fel d 1 of Allerca cats reacted strongly with antibodies from allergic patients. These results did not support claims that the Allerca cats were hypoallergenic. Full disclosure: Indoor Biotechnologies was paid its standard allergen analysis fees for testing these samples. See Part 1 below:

The Case of the Hypoallergenic Cat (11 mins)

Part 1: Experts test whether hypoallergenic claims are the real deal in selected cats.

<http://abcnews.go.com/Nightline/video/case-hypoallergenic-cat>

In Part 2 of the ABC LOOKOUT program, reporter Dan Harris and the ABC team arranged to buy an Allerca cat from Simon Brodie. They first confirmed that Simon Brodie had left the United States (where he is being investigated for fraud) and lived in London, U.K., where he had changed his name to Simon Carradan.

ABC arranged to buy an Allerca cat for \$6,950 and was e-mailed a cell phone picture of the cat. Using geo-tagging, Jacqueline Jesko of ABC discovered a cattery in London where the cat had been purchased for £170. In Part 2 of ABC LOOKOUT, Dan Harris confronts Simon Brodie (aka Carradan) about Allerca's claims that the cat ABC purchased (which they named "Dollar Bill") was hypoallergenic. See Part 2 below:

Man Behind Hypoallergenic Cats (7 mins)

Part 2: Can you breed hypoallergenic cats? The man who sells the felines as hypoallergenic gives us his answer and more.

<http://abcnews.go.com/Nightline/video/man-hypoallergenic-cats>

Other links:

There is no published evidence that genetically variant cats (or dogs) with mutations in Fel d 1 or Can f 1 genes are less allergenic than regular breeds. For further information, check the following links:

[Felis Enigmaticus - PDF](#)

[Cat Designer Declares War](#)

[Is Murray Hypoallergenic? - PDF](#)

Testing Your Cat's Allergen Levels

While all cats produce the allergen Fel d 1, the actual level secreted can vary greatly between individual cats.

Based on this knowledge, some cat breeders have made an active effort of selecting their breeding stock with the aim of reducing allergen production. Many breeders of Siberian cats for example, routinely test saliva and fur samples of their breeding animals as well as kittens before they go to their new homes (www.kittentesting.com, www.siberianresearch.com).

While no peer-reviewed studies have been published that compare allergen levels produced by different cat breeds, it is commendable that these breeders make the effort of collecting these data in the interest of their customers' health.

The scientists at Indoor Biotechnologies have years of experience with this type of testing, and are happy to help you with your investigation.