

SOUTHWESTERN NEWS

Media Contact: Angela Genusa
214-648-3404
angela.genusa@utsouthwestern.edu

UT SOUTHWESTERN PHYSICIAN OFFERS TIPS ON SURVIVING SEVERE RAGWEED SEASON

DALLAS – Aug. 23, 2001 – School bells are ringing across the land this month, and for students with allergies that means “the three Rs” – ragweed, runny noses and rhinitis.

“This year, we had a very wet spring, followed by a hot, dry summer, which means a bad ragweed season,” said Dr. Richard Mabry, professor of otolaryngology – head and neck surgery at UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas.

Severe ragweed pollen levels for the Dallas area are forecast from mid-August through October, peaking around the first week of September. Dallas ranks seventh in a new list of the top 25 cities where ragweed is expected to be most severe this year, according to a study conducted by GlaxoKlineSmith. (See attached list of the other 24 cities.) Dallas is down from third place on last year’s list of ragweed-ridden cities; still, it’s no small consolation to those who are allergic to ragweed.

Mabry offers the following tips on how to keep ragweed pollen at bay:

- Begin allergy medications before ragweed pollen levels become severe. “Take an antihistamine *before* you need it,” he said.
- Talk to your family doctor, otolaryngologist or allergist about the best allergy medications for you. “There are more and more good, new drugs available,” he said.
- Watch weather reports for pollen counts and forecasts. “Don’t go outdoors unless necessary,” he said. Especially avoid outdoor activity during peak pollen times (6 a.m. to 10 a.m.).
- Use cromolyn sodium nasal spray before engaging in outdoor activities, such as mowing the grass, gardening, or playing golf or soccer.
- Wear a particle mask and sunglasses when mowing the lawn or gardening.
- After outdoor activities — especially after mowing the grass — take your clothes off as soon as you get indoors, put them in the washer, and take a shower. Also use a saline

(MORE)

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SOUTHWESTERN MEDICAL CENTER AT DALLAS
Southwestern Medical School • Southwestern Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences • Southwestern Allied Health Sciences School
Affiliated teaching hospitals and outpatient clinics

Office of News and Publications • 5323 Harry Hines Blvd., Dallas TX 75390-9060 • Telephone (214) 648-3404 • FAX (214) 648-9119

RAGWEED SEASON - 2

nasal spray to rinse pollen from your nasal passages.

Mabry said allergy sufferers should watch for new therapies being developed to treat allergies, such as peptide immunotherapy, anti-IgE and anti-interleukins, which block allergic reactions and carry less risk of reactions than do allergy injections.

“There is hope on the horizon,” he said.

###

This news release is available on our World Wide Web home page at
http://www.utsouthwestern.edu/home_pages/news/

To automatically receive news releases from UT Southwestern via e-mail, send a message to
UTSWNEWS-REQUEST@listserv.swmed.edu. Leave the subject line blank and in the text box, type
SUB UTSWNEWS

25 WORST RAGWEED CITIES

1. Tulsa, Okla.
2. Oklahoma City, Okla.
3. Louisville, Ky.
4. Jackson, Miss.
5. St. Louis, Mo.
6. Lubbock, Texas
7. Dallas, Texas
8. Austin, Texas
9. Wichita, Kan.
10. Shreveport, La.
11. Lexington, Ky.
12. Little Rock, Ark.
13. Columbus, Ohio
14. New Orleans, La.
15. Montgomery, Ala.
16. Springfield, Mo.
17. Atlanta, Ga.
18. Omaha, Neb.
19. Springfield, Ill.
20. Kansas City, Mo.
21. Memphis, Tenn.
22. Cincinnati, Ohio
23. Indianapolis, Ind.
24. Dayton, Ohio
25. South Bend, Ind.