

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON HEALTH CENTER**

**-HEALTHBERRY-**  
[www.uh.edu/admin/hc](http://www.uh.edu/admin/hc)

**AIR POLLUTION, ALLERGIES AND OZONE**

The pollution of the air we breathe is related to myriads of factors. Climate, humidity, concentration of air pollutants in heavily industrial and densely populated areas, thermal inversion, stagnant air masses, seasonal and perennial airborne pollens, dust, moulds, spores and ozone are but a few.

Allergies present themselves according to their target organ of involvement. For example, allergic rhinitis and sinusitis presents as sneezing, runny nose, tearing, itching of the nose and throat and nasal obstruction. It can be both seasonal and perennial (chronic). The airborne pollens of spring and fall grasses, weeds, trees, and flowers are well known to us all. Perennial or chronic allergies are due to industrial pollutants, dust, dust mites and animal dander. Allergic conjunctivitis creates itching, red eyes, which can be treated with cold compresses, antihistamines and topical steroids. Allergic dermatitis, eczema and urticaria require special prescriptions from your doctor as does asthma.

Ozone is the major agent in the formation of smog. Ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) is a form of oxygen (O<sub>2</sub>). It is a bluish, irritating gas of pungent odor formed naturally in the upper atmosphere by a photochemical reaction with solar ultraviolet radiation or by electric discharge in air. Ozone is also a product of arc welding, flour bleaching, deodorizing, emissions from copying equipment and photochemical air pollution. Ozone is a mucous membrane irritant and causes irritation of the nose, throat, eyes and lungs. It is particularly harmful to children with asthma and to the elderly with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (Editors note: To get a daily count of ozone and other pollutants in Houston, visit our web site and click on [City of Houston Health Department](#)).

We at the University Health clinic treat allergy problems everyday. Come visit us!



**Healthfully yours,**

**Dr. Healthberry**

---

For questions or comments you can;

Write "Healthberry" at  
University Health Center,  
100 UH Health Center, Houston,  
Texas 77204-3019,

E-Mail "[Healthberry](mailto:JMGray2@central.uh.edu)" at [JMGray2@central.uh.edu](mailto:JMGray2@central.uh.edu)  
Fax "Healthberry" at (713)743-5164.