

# Health Check

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## Want relief from springtime allergy symptoms?

Read advice from a medical specialist



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**S**pringtime in Houston: For allergy sufferers, blossoming trees and airborne pollen can bring considerable misery.

### What's making you have symptoms?

In the Greater Houston area, springtime pollens can include oak, ash, pecan, and other trees and grasses. During the year, other outdoor allergens can include pollen from grasses and weeds as well as mold spores. Our high humidity also promotes elevated levels of household dust mites. So, if you have got a heightened sensitivity to these usually harmless substances, you could be experiencing uncomfortable quality-of-life issues including irritated itchy eyes, serial sneezing, nasal congestion, and, for some, asthma flare ups.

True allergies affect about 30 percent of the Texas population. But non-allergic triggers like Houston's weather changes and air quality can cause many folks to suffer from nasal and sinus symptoms.

### What's your best bet for relief?

Allergy avoidance is a first step, but most times that's not a practical option.

A good initial strategy for anyone suffering repeated allergy issues is to have an evaluation by a board-certified allergist. The exam may involve a skin or blood test to help find out whether pollen, animal dander, dust mites, or other environmental factors are the source of symptoms.

Treatment options depend on the cause of the allergy response. The most commonly used medications for relieving seasonal symptoms are antihistamines and prescription nasal sprays. For more severe symptoms, a number of other medication options are available. However, if you're seeking long-term relief and aren't responding well to medications, a program of allergy shots may be your best treatment option.

*Dr. Harrison cares for pediatric and adult patients and welcomes new patients at Kelsey-Seybold's Berthelsen Main Campus; Spring Medical and Diagnostic Center; and Kingwood Clinic.*

To schedule a **Video Visit** or **In-Person Appointment**, call **713-442-0000** or go online to **kelsey-seybold.com**.