2017 SPRING POLLEN ALERT

Jefferson City, MO. – The high number of cedar trees in our area is contributing to high quantities of allergenic pollens in central Missouri, more so than other metropolitan areas such as St. Louis and Kansas City. The peak of cedar pollen shedding usually occurs in the last week of February and the early part of March and can cause discomfort to many people in the area. Several trees including cedar, maple and box elder are blooming profusely with very small and inconspicuous flowers. Their pollens are detected by area pollen counting stations. Some people are allergic to these pollens.

Cedar pollen concentration has alleviated quickly in response to the recent warm weather. The allergy symptoms are very similar to those of colds. If you experience itching eyes, sneezing and a running nose, you may be allergic to spring pollens. Please consider taking over-the–counter allergy medicines to help reduce the symptoms. Also, taking allergy medicine in the morning and letting it wear off over 16 hours will not affect sleep. Pay close attention to young children. Some children who are allergic to pollens may show cold symptoms and appear to be cranky and tired. If the allergy symptoms are ignored, some people could develop secondary respiratory infection or asthma. It is a good idea to take youth to an allergy doctor for an early diagnosis and treatments.

The cedar pollen season may last for weeks. Here are a few tips to help the allergy sufferers who do not take allergy medicine:

• Avoid outdoor activities if possible and wear a hat and mask to cover your hairs and face for filtering air when outside.
• Take showers to wash off pollens and change into fresh clothing before going to bed.
• Use a fresh towel to cover pillow or a fresh pillowcase every night.
• Keep doors and windows shut and run air conditioners in a car and at home to filter air which will reduce pollens so as to ease your allergic symptoms.
• See an allergy medical doctor for treatment.

For more information, please contact Dr. Hwei–Yiing Johnson at (573) 681–5533 or email JohnsonH@LincolnU.edu.