

Allergies 'Worst in Years'

This spring's tree pollen season has been off the charts, especially in the South, causing allergy sufferers to experience their worst symptoms in memory.

Blame the weather. "Trees received a healthy amount of precipitation during a very cold winter," says Paul Gomes, M.A., director of allergy research at ORA Clinical, in Andover, Mass. This was immediately followed by a sunny, warm and dry spring. So, instead of a gradual release of pollen, the burst of record warmth triggered an explosion of tree and plant pollen.

A high pollen count, accord-

ing to The Weather Channel, is about 120. Yet, in early April, Atlanta recorded a pollen count of 5,722—its second-highest pollen count ever. Extremely high levels of pollen occurred elsewhere throughout the South, Midwest and the Plains.

"Pollen exposure of as little as 10 minutes ... induces both nasal and ocular allergic symptoms," Mr. Gomes says. About 80% to 90% of allergic rhinitis patients also experience ocular allergies. "For allergy sufferers, periods of high pollen days increase the severity and frequency of ocular allergic symptoms in relation to nasal allergic symptoms." ■

Pa. College of Optometry Breaks Ground on New Eye Institute



On April 29, the Eye Institute of the Pennsylvania College of Optometry at Salus University broke ground on a construction project that will redesign, renovate and dramatically enhance

the existing facility. The result will be a functional and attractive 14,000-square-foot expansion that will allow all patient care services to occur on one level. Renovations will include three primary care suites, a pediatric suite and a specialty suite, as well as an expanded eyewear center with more than 2,100 square feet of retail space. The project's estimated completion date is late spring 2011.



Under those hard hats are **Anthony Di Stefano, O.D., M.P.H., Vice President and Dean of Academic Affairs; Holly Myers, O.D., Interim Associate Dean; Linda Casser, O.D., Dean; Susan Oleszewski, O.D., M.A., Vice President of Patient Care Services; and Thomas L. Lewis, O.D., Ph.D., Salus University President.**

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