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## **AAFA Releases 2016 Fall Allergy Capitals™ Report**

*Jackson, Mississippi Ranked as the Most Challenging City for Fall Allergies*

**December 15, 2016, LANDOVER, MD** — Today, the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA), the leading patient advocacy organization in the United States representing nearly 61 million Americans who experience asthma or allergies, released its annual Fall Allergy Capitals™ report. The report identifies the most challenging places to live with fall allergies among the 100 largest metropolitan areas in the U.S. AAFA has published this annual guide since 2003 to raise awareness about the impact of fall allergies, and to help improve the quality of life for the people who experience them by helping people recognize, prevent, and manage allergy symptoms, and to help communities meet the needs of their residents with allergic diseases.

This year, Jackson, Mississippi takes the top spot on our list. The other top most challenging cities include: 2. Memphis, Tennessee; 3. McAllen, Texas; 4. Louisville, Kentucky; and 5. Syracuse, New York. Last year, Jackson was No. 2 on our list, and Louisville, Kentucky was No. 1.

Dr. Cary Sennett, MD, PhD, FACP, and AAFA's President and CEO notes that "AAFA's annual Fall Allergy Capitals™ report provides important insights into cities where people are most affected by seasonal symptoms due to environmental factors such as pollen, behaviors such as allergy medication usage and the availability of board-certified clinicians. Whether you live in one of these allergy capitals or anywhere else, it's important to work with your health care providers to recognize the elements that trigger your allergies, and determine the best treatments to enjoy your life unencumbered by seasonal nasal allergies."

Allergies are the 6<sup>th</sup> leading cause of chronic illness in the United States.<sup>1</sup> According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 8.4% of U.S. children suffer from hay fever, and 10% have respiratory allergies.<sup>2</sup> Nasal allergies affect more than 50 million Americans,<sup>3</sup> and the resulting doctor visits, allergy medicines, and other factors contribute to more than \$18 billion in health costs.<sup>4</sup>

Meryl Bloomrosen, MBA, MBI, AAFA's Senior Vice President for Policy, Research and Advocacy notes that "allergies are a major public health concern, and are among the country's most common, but overlooked, diseases. In the absence of a cure, we recognize that reducing and controlling exposure to environmental triggers is key to an individual's ability to successfully self-manage and control their allergies. Having access to reliable and



useful information is also important, and AAFA is proud to offer vibrant online allergy and asthma support communities at <https://community.aafa.org>.”

To view the full Fall Allergy Capitals™ report, visit [www.AllergyCapitals.com](http://www.AllergyCapitals.com).

AAFA’s 2016 Fall Allergy Capitals™ Report was supported in part by pollen.com (QuintilesIMS).

## About AAFA

Founded in 1953 and celebrating over 60 years of service, the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) is the oldest and largest nonprofit patient organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with asthma, allergies and related conditions through education, advocacy and research. AAFA provides practical information, community-based services, support and referrals through a national network of chapters and educational support groups. Through its Kids With Food Allergies division, AAFA offers the oldest, most extensive online support community for families raising children with food allergies. In addition, AAFA sponsors and advocates for research to advance the basic science relevant to treatment and cure. It also champions translational research so that the science that we have is applied more consistently and reliably. For more information, visit [www.aafa.org](http://www.aafa.org), and [www.kidswithfoodallergies.org](http://www.kidswithfoodallergies.org).

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/ToolsTemplates/EntertainmentEd/Tips/Allergies.html>

<sup>2</sup> National Center for Health Statistics. National Health Interview Survey, 2015. Table C-2a. Age-adjusted percentages (with standard errors) of hay fever, respiratory allergies, food allergies, and skin allergies in the past 12 months for children under age 18 years, by selected characteristics: United States, 2015. [https://ftp.cdc.gov/pub/Health\\_Statistics/NCHS/NHIS/SHS/2015\\_SHS\\_Table\\_C-2.pdf](https://ftp.cdc.gov/pub/Health_Statistics/NCHS/NHIS/SHS/2015_SHS_Table_C-2.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/ToolsTemplates/EntertainmentEd/Tips/Allergies.html>

<sup>4</sup> Id.