5 Best Places to Live with Asthma

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Easiest Places to Breathe with Asthma

The Asthma and Allergy Foundation of American (AAFA) releases a report annually — the AAFA Asthma Capitals — that ranks the most challenging places to live with asthma. Their goal? To bring awareness to areas where people are suffering, so that they can advocate for better healthcare and health policy.

This list ranks the top 100 metropolitan cities. As such, there are faults to this list. It does not include rural and small towns that may be lacking, nor does it include triggers such as allergens.

Angel Waldron, the Marketing and Communications Manager for the AAFA, says, "We get so many people with asthma asking us, 'Where should I move?' Unfortunately, it's just not a question we can answer. There are so many factors, and it all depends on what triggers your symptoms."

The AAFA Asthma Capitals report evaluated the following factors:

Asthma outcomes

- Asthma prevalence
- Asthma-related emergency department visits
- Asthma-related deaths

Asthma risk factors

- Poverty
- Lack of health insurance
- Poor air quality
- Pollen
- Long-term medication use
- Quick-relief medication use
- Smoking laws
- Access to specialists

So, Are There Better Places to Live with Asthma?

This is subjective, of course. However, according to the AAFA Asthma Capitals 2019 report…

The best place to live with asthma is…**Cape Coral, Florida!**
Cape Coral, Florida has a better than average asthma prevalence, and it has a better than average amount of emergency room visits for asthma, though they have an average amount of deaths related to asthma.

Rounding out number two is…**McAllen, Texas!**
McAllen, Texas has a better than average amount of emergency room visits for asthma, and it has a better than average amount of deaths related to asthma. However, they have an average amount of people with asthma.

Coming in at number three is…**Houston, Texas!**
Houston, Texas has a better than average amount of emergency room visits for asthma, and it has a better than average amount of deaths related to asthma. They also boast a better than average amount of people with asthma.

Trailing at number four is…**Sarasota, Florida!**
Sarasota, Florida has a better than average asthma prevalence, and it has a better than average amount of amount of deaths related to asthma. However, they have an average amount of emergency department visits related to asthma.

And bringing in the top five is…**Daytona Beach, Florida!**
Daytona Beach, Florida has a better than average amount of emergency room visits for asthma, and it has a better than average amount of deaths related to asthma. They also boast a better than average amount of people with asthma.

If these are the top five places to live with asthma in the nation, why do some of these glorious locations still have "average" rankings?

As Angel Waldron of the AAFA mentioned, we all have triggers that make our asthma unique; even if you live in Cape Coral, Florida, you could have an asthma attack each week if you are prone to a specific trigger.

Common Triggers

Air pollution is a common trigger, which is why many of these cities are reported on the Asthma Capitals list. However, air pollution doesn't just include smog and particle pollution that we associate with big cities; air pollution also includes smoke from wildfires and vehicle exhaust.

The cities that had the least air pollution, as ranked by the American Lung association (ALA), include **Cheyenne, Wyoming, Farmington, New Mexico, and Casper, Wyoming**. So, they too could be strong contenders for the easiest places to breathe with asthma.

The cities that had the worst air pollution were all in California — **Los Angeles-Long Beach, Bakersfield, and Fresno-Madera**.

Allergens are another common trigger and are highly individualized. Common allergens are pollens and grasses, which wreak havoc at various times of the year. However, allergies can be attributed to many different things including medications, foods, cleaning products — the list is endless.

The cities that ranked the highest for both spring and fall allergens, according to the AAFA, include **Jackson, Mississippi and Memphis, Tennessee**. **McAllen, Texas** ranked third for fall allergies, while **Syracuse, New York** ranked third for spring allergies.

Weather can also worsen asthma symptoms quickly! For example, hot and humid weather can cause mold to grow; those with a mold allergy can become susceptible to allergy attacks because of the mold formation, as well as increased chance of rain, which blows pollen.

In cold, dry air, it can be difficult to breathe; cold air also causes the airways to tighten. This is why climate and asthma is another important consideration.

Best Places to Live with Asthma: The Bottom Line…

When it comes to the easiest places to breathe with asthma, there is no "perfect" place; we all have triggers that cause our symptoms to worsen in even the most "ideal" locations.