

MIGRAID · APRIL 2026

# The 2026 U.S. Migraine Risk Index — At a Glance

## The Study

The first 100-city migraine risk analysis since Sperling's 2006 study. MigrAid scored the 100 largest U.S. metros on a four-factor composite: season length, trigger diversity, severity of pressure events, and baseline atmospheric stability.

## Top 5 Findings

1. **Denver leads the nation in weather-driven migraine risk** with a score of 73.78 — nearly 2.96× the national median (24.94).
2. **The Mountain West is America's migraine epicenter.** Five of the 10 highest-risk cities sit at elevations where baseline atmospheric pressure is materially lower than sea level.
3. **November is America's worst migraine month.** 80 of 100 cities list it in their peak-trigger season.
4. **California dominates the best-cities list**, taking 5 of the 20 most favorable metros. San Diego ranks #100 (lowest risk).
5. **The American migraine year has twin peaks** — late fall (October-November) and spring (March-April) — both driven by active frontal passage seasons.

## Top 5 Most Challenging Cities

RANK	CITY	SCORE
1	Denver, CO	73.78
2	Colorado Springs, CO	62.98
3	Flagstaff, AZ	59.44
4	Santa Fe, NM	47.5
5	Duluth, MN	45.93

## Top 5 Most Favorable Cities

RANK	CITY	SCORE
100	San Diego, CA	6.25
99	Bakersfield, CA	12.11
98	Tucson, AZ	12.34
97	Fresno, CA	13.43
96	New York, NY	13.92

## Methodology (Brief)

Four weighted factors: Season Length (40%), Trigger Diversity (25%), Severity of Pressure Events (25%), Baseline Stability including altitude (10%). Scored from city-level atmospheric data, published weather patterns, and peer-reviewed migraine trigger literature (*Headache* 2023; *Frontiers in Neurology* 2025; *Cureus* 2025).

Full methodology and 100-city ranking: [migraid.app/reports/city-migraine-index-2026/](https://migraid.app/reports/city-migraine-index-2026/)

### Press Contact

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Interview availability, high-res graphics, interactive map, city-specific cuts on request.