



## PRESS RELEASE

### **NEW RESEARCH REVEALS DEVASTATING IMPACT OF BRITAIN'S ALLERGY EPIDEMIC**

- **ONE IN THREE UK FAMILIES AFFECTED - WITH YOUNGEST FAMILY MEMBER LESS THAN 12 MONTHS OLD**
- **TWO THIRDS OF PARENTS SAY THE CONDITION IS RUINING THEIR CHILDREN'S LIVES, WHILE A FIFTH OF ADULTS DREAD SUMMER**
- **ONE THIRD ALLERGIC TO AT LEAST ONE INDOOR ALLERGEN**
- **BRITISH SUFFERERS WILL SPEND £384 MILLION ON TREATMENT THIS YEAR ALONE<sup>1</sup>**

With forecasters predicting the pollen count to soar tomorrow [Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> June], a new nationwide report has revealed the misery allergy sufferers face, as 36% of adults now suffer from some form of airborne sensitivity with a fifth of us dreading the summer months as a result.

The British Airborne Allergy report<sup>2</sup>, which was commissioned by air purification experts [Fellowes](#) in association with charity [Allergy UK](#) shows that a third of all families have children who are already struggling with allergies (34 per cent).

Worryingly, one in eight (13 per cent) display symptoms when they are less than a year old, while a quarter (26 per cent) become ill before their second birthday.

In a fifth of families more than one child is suffering and symptoms can be severe - with one in 10 unable to leave the house.

As a result two thirds of parents (66 per cent) say allergies are damaging their lives having to take desperate measures like ripping out carpets (seven per cent), binning old furniture (five per cent) and avoiding friends (two per cent) to try and help.

The cost of this allergy epidemic is huge - with British sufferers set to spend a staggering £384 million<sup>1</sup> on treatments this year alone.

According to the British Airborne Allergy report, which gathered the opinions of more than 2,000 people nationwide, two thirds of all sufferers buy medication to try and provide some kind of relief.

The research found the physical and emotional impact of coping with these conditions - for adults and children - was high.

One in eight parents say symptoms have made their child's life a misery or stopped them going to school (13 per cent), while one in ten (nine per cent) struggle to leave their home.

Another nine per cent say allergies have stopped youngsters pursuing hobbies and six per cent regularly have to miss sports.

The effect on adults is just as devastating. Almost half (46 per cent) of sufferers have missed out on major life events like weddings and funerals or suffered depression (9 per cent) and exhaustion (25 per cent) as a direct result of their allergies.

Feeling safeguarded from airborne allergens when indoors isn't the case as the research highlights the level of suffering when inside.

More than a quarter (28 per cent) say they can't sleep and a fifth (19 per cent) actively dread the summer months.

One in 10 of those quizzed (11 per cent) said their symptoms were worse at work and another one in ten had to take time off altogether.

More than half a million people could potentially be isolating themselves (three per cent) from family<sup>3</sup> and friends or have to change jobs.

And it seems allergies - airborne and indoor - could be inherited, with many children suffering the same sensitivities as their parents.

The British Airborne Allergy report found that 34 per cent of parents afflicted by hay fever and 24 per cent hit by house dust mite allergy had kids that were too.

Overall it is hay fever that hits children hardest - affecting one in five - while five per cent can't tolerate pets and another 5% are allergic to dust.

In adults, that pattern continues. According to the report, one in four have problems with airborne allergens like pollen, while for almost one in ten (nine per cent) say it's dust causing symptoms.

Despite often serious consequences, less than half of all adults (47 per cent) have received a formal diagnosis from a medical professional but 39 per cent of people do try a range of measures to try and find some relief.

Investing in an air purifier is the most common line of defence - chosen by ten per cent of respondents - followed by ripping out wooden floors and carpets (seven per cent), buying new furniture (five per cent) or having the house deep-cleaned (three per cent).

Speaking about the findings, Fellowes spokesman, Mike Booth, said they demonstrated just how tough life could be for the UK's 18 million allergy sufferers and urged them to think about a range of treatment options for themselves and their families this year.

Mike said: "Summer should be a great time - for the whole family. Sadly, as our British Airborne Allergy report shows only too clearly the devastating impact allergies can have on adults and children, especially in warmer weather.

"But there are ways people can protect themselves. People are suffering unnecessarily as our AeraMax™ air purifiers can help remove more than 99 per cent of harmful indoor airborne particles as small as 0.3 microns - including dust mite particles, pet dander and pollen - to make breathing easier and reduce symptoms.

"Small and unobtrusive, they're neat enough to fit into a bedroom or child's play area and can be moved around to work where they're most needed."

Allergy UK spokesperson, Lindsey McManus, deputy CEO of Allergy UK, agrees. As she says, ignoring symptoms can impact on health and well-being.

Lindsey explains: "Britain has one of the highest allergy rates in the world and what this research makes very clear is the serious effect they have on our health and happiness.

"This isn't a problem that is going away, especially as we are seeing an increasing number of children and babies affected.

"We know summer is set to be a bad time for all of those struggling to cope with allergies - with high predicted pollen rates and periods of low air quality - and we need to be better prepared for that.

"Medication is just one way of counter-acting symptoms and we would advise sufferers to consider all options - from air purifiers to changing soft furnishings and furniture, as part of their management plan."

The report was commissioned in line with the launch of Fellowes **AeraMax™** range of air purifiers, which are scientifically proven to reduce exposure to allergens and is endorsed by Allergy UK, the British Allergy Foundation.

As well as its high performance features, the **AeraMax™** boasts a sensor which monitors air quality and automatically adjusts the fan speed to keep air purified to help reduce the severity of a reaction.

Its **Aera+™ Mode** is designed for peak allergy conditions and can increase airflow by up to 50% depending on the size of model – for the full report, click [here](#).

- Ends -

**For media enquiries, case studies and additional commentary please contact Sam Bramwell or Manisha Jani on 01625 822 200 or email [manisha.jani@mccann.com](mailto:manisha.jani@mccann.com)**

**For out of office enquiries, please call 077381 96667.**

#### **Notes to editors**

1 Calculation: 36% of British adults are allergic to at least 1 airborne allergen. There are some 48 million British adults in (age 18+); therefore, 36% of 48m = 17.28m. Sixty seven per cent pay something for medication; therefore, 67% of 17.28m = 11.58m pay something for their medication. The average spend of medication is £33.33 therefore the total spend of British sufferers on medication for their airborne allergies = £33.33 x 11.58m people =384m.

2 Independent Research commissioned by Fellowes in association with Allergy UK and carried out by Dynamic Markets in May 2014.

3 Equivalent to 505,005 people and 410,000 respectively

#### **About Fellowes:**

Fellowes, Inc. offers an extensive range of products to equip the workspace, including paper shredders, binders, laminators, desktop accessories and record storage solutions.

Founded in 1917 by Harry Fellowes and headquartered in Itasca, Illinois, Fellowes, Inc. employs more than 1,200 people throughout the world and has operations in 15 countries. Visit [fellowes.com](http://fellowes.com) for more information.

#### **About Allergy UK**

Allergy UK is the operational name of the British Allergy Foundation; the leading national medical charity providing advice, information and support to people with allergies and food intolerance. Allergy UK acts as the 'voice' of allergy sufferers, representing the views and needs of those affected by this multi organ disease. Allergy UK is a certified member of The Information Standard, which is an independent certification scheme for health and social care information supported by the Department of Health. For further information and to see a list of all certified members to the scheme, please visit: [www.theinformationstandard.org](http://www.theinformationstandard.org)