

ASTHMA FACTS

Asthma continues to be a serious public health problem. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:

- An estimated 23 million people, including over 6 million children, have asthma.¹
- Asthma prevalence is higher among persons with family income below the poverty level.²
- Over 11 million people reported having an asthma attack in a recent government survey.³
- Asthma accounts for more than 15 million physician office and hospital outpatient department visits,^{4,5} and nearly 2 million emergency department visits each year.⁶

Black Americans continue to have higher rates of asthma emergency department visits, hospitalizations, and deaths than white Americans:

- Their rate of emergency department visits is 300% higher.³
- Their hospitalization rate is 220% higher.³
- Their asthma death rate is 180% higher.³

Approximately 3 million Hispanics in the United States and its territories have asthma, and Puerto Ricans are disproportionately affected:

- The rate of asthma among Puerto Ricans is 113% higher than non-Hispanic Whites and 50% higher than non-Hispanic Blacks.⁷
- The prevalence of asthma attacks is highest among Puerto Ricans.^{2,3}

Asthma in Children:

- Asthma is one of the most common serious chronic diseases of childhood.
- Asthma is the third-ranking cause of hospitalization among children younger than 15.⁸
- An average of one out of every 10 school-age children has asthma.⁹
- 10.5 million school days are missed each year due to asthma.³

The Cost of Asthma:

- The annual economic cost of asthma—including direct medical costs from hospital stays and indirect costs, such as lost school and work days—amounts to more than \$56 billion annually.¹⁰

Environmental Factors:

- Indoor and outdoor environmental asthma factors including dust mites, molds, cockroaches, pet dander, secondhand smoke, ozone, and particle pollution, can trigger asthma attacks.

Asthma Can Be Controlled

- With a plan that includes medical treatment and control of environmental triggers, people with asthma can lead healthy, active lives.

Learn more at <http://www.epa.gov/asthma>

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References

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