

# PENNSYLVANIA ASTHMA FACT SHEET

## 2011

### WHAT IS ASTHMA?

Asthma is a chronic disease characterized by repeated episodes of wheezing, breathlessness, chest tightness and nighttime or early morning coughing. Asthma attacks are caused by lung inflammation and a sudden narrowing of the lung's small airways in response to asthma triggers. Asthma attacks can be mild, or they can become severe, serious and life threatening. The cause of asthma is unknown and no cure exists. However, with appropriate management of asthma (health care, medication, trigger avoidance, etc.) people with asthma can prevent symptoms and attacks, minimize or eliminate time missed from work or school, participate normally in athletic and physical activity and enjoy quality of life.

### ADULT ASTHMA PREVALENCE

➤ 2009 Adult **Lifetime** Asthma Prevalence (18 and older):

- Lifetime asthma prevalence for Pennsylvania adults, 18 and older, was approximately 13% (95% CI: 12-15), or about 1.2 million adults.
- Lifetime asthma prevalence for Non-Hispanic African American adults was higher 16% (95% CI: 11-22) compared to Non-Hispanic White adults, at approximately 13% (95% CI: 12-14).
- About 15% (95% CI: 14-17) of female adults have been diagnosed with asthma, prevalence was significantly higher compared to about 12% (95% CI: 10-13) of male adults.
- Lifetime Asthma Prevalence by age group:

18-29	20% (95% CI: 16-25)
30-44	14% (95% CI: 12-17)
45-64	11% (95% CI: 10-13)
65+	10% (95% CI: 8-11)
- No significant differences were seen for education between adults with a high school education and a college degree.
- No significant differences were seen for adults with household incomes less than \$15,000 and \$25,000 or greater.

➤ 2009 Adult **Current** Asthma Prevalence (18 and older):

- Current asthma prevalence for Pennsylvania adults, 18 and older, was approximately 9% (95% CI: 8-10), or about 877,000 adults.
- Current asthma prevalence for Non-Hispanic African American adults was higher 11% (95% CI: 7-16) compared to Non-Hispanic White adults at approximately 9% (95% CI: 8-10).
- About 11% (95% CI: 10-13) of female adults reported currently having asthma, and this percentage was significantly higher compared to about 7% (95% CI: 5-8) of males.
- Current Asthma Prevalence by age group:

18-29	12% (95% CI: 9-16)
30-44	10% (95% CI: 9-12)
45-64	8% (95% CI: 7-9)
65+	7% (95% CI: 6-8)
- Adults with less than a high school education had significantly higher percentage of current asthma of 13% (95% CI: 10-18) compared to adults with a college degree at 7% (95% CI: 6-8).
- Adults with a household income less than \$15,000 had a statistically significant elevated current asthma prevalence of 14% (95% CI: 10-19) compared to adults with household incomes of \$25,000 or greater.

Data Source: PA Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (PA BRFSS).



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### CHILD ASTHMA PREVALENCE

- 2009 Child **Lifetime** Asthma Prevalence (under age 18):
  - Lifetime asthma prevalence for Pennsylvania children, under age 18, was approximately 15% (95% CI: 13-17), or about 427,500 children.
  - Non-Hispanic African American children had a lifetime asthma prevalence of about 19% (95% CI: 12-29) compared to about 13% (95% CI: 12-16) for Non-Hispanic White children.
  - Male children had a lifetime asthma prevalence of about 17% (95% CI: 14-21) compared to about 13% (95% CI: 10-16) of female children.
- 2009 Child **Current** Asthma Prevalence (under age 18):
  - Current asthma prevalence for Pennsylvania children, under age 18, was approximately 10% (95% CI: 8-13), or approximately 285,000 children.
  - Non-Hispanic African American children had a significantly higher current asthma prevalence about 15% (95% CI: 9-24) compared to 9% (95% CI: 7-11) of Non-Hispanic White children.
  - Male children had a current asthma prevalence of about 12% (95% CI: 10-16) compared to about 8% (95% CI: 6-11) of female children.

Data Source: PA Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (PA BRFSS).

### ASTHMA HOSPITALIZATIONS FACTS

- In Pennsylvania in 2009, over 24,458 inpatient hospitalizations were due to asthma.
  - Approximately 19.4 inpatient admissions, for every 10,000 Pennsylvania residents, had a primary discharge diagnosis of asthma.
  - The highest asthma hospitalization rates were in Philadelphia; approximately 54.1 inpatient admissions for every 10,000 residents, this is almost three times more than in entire state.
  - Children aged 0-4 years had the highest asthma hospitalization rate, 48.5 per 10,000, followed by the 65+ group rate of 27.2 per 10,000.
  - Approximately 71% of inpatient admissions with a primary discharge diagnosis of asthma were admitted through the emergency room.
  - Charges for inpatient hospitalizations (not including physician charges) due to asthma were approximately \$555,657,794.
  - The average charge for each asthma hospitalization was \$22,718.
  - The average length of stay for each asthma hospitalization was 3.4 days.
  - Age-adjusted asthma hospitalization rates per 10,000 Pennsylvania residents:

Males:	14.9	Females:	23.3
Whites:	11.8	African Americans:	61.6
Hispanics:	35.3	Non-Hispanics:	18.5

Data Source: Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council (PA PHC4).

### ASTHMA MORTALITY FACTS

- In Pennsylvania in 2008, the asthma age-adjusted death rate (asthma as the underlying cause of death) was 1.3 per 100,000. 174 adults and 10 children died with asthma as the underlying cause of death.
  - African Americans (4.3 per 100,000) are more than four times as likely to die from asthma as Whites (1.0 per 100,000).
  - Death rates in 2007 by sex and race per 100,000 Pennsylvania residents:

Males:	1.2	Females:	1.4
White Males:	0.8	White Females:	1.1
African American Males:	4.1	African American Females:	4.0

Data Source: Bureau of Health Statistics and Research, PA DOH.