

ASTHMA FACTS

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

- About 23 million people, including almost 7 million children, have asthma.^{1,2}
 - * Asthma prevalence is higher among families with lower incomes.
- 12 million people report having an asthma attack in the past year.³
- Asthma accounts for nearly 17 million physician office and hospital visits,⁴ and nearly 2 million emergency department visits each year.³
- African Americans continue to have higher rates of asthma emergency department visits, hospitalizations, and deaths than do Caucasians:
 - * The rate of emergency department visits is 350% higher.³
 - * The hospitalization rate is 240% higher.³
 - * The asthma death rate is 200% higher.³
- Approximately 2 million Hispanics in the U.S. have asthma and Puerto Ricans are disproportionately impacted:
 - The rate of asthma among Puerto Ricans is 125% higher than non-Hispanic white people and 80% higher than non-Hispanic black people.³
 - The prevalence of asthma attacks is highest among Puerto Ricans.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 under 15.⁵
- Asthma in children is the cause of seven million physician visits and nearly 200,000 hospitalizations.
- An average of one out of every 10 school-aged child has asthma.⁶
- 13 million school days are missed each year due to asthma.⁷

The Cost of Asthma:

- Annual expenditures for health and lost productivity due to asthma are estimated at over \$20 billion, according to the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.⁸

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Asthma and the Environment

Research by EPA and others has shown that:

- Dust mites, molds, cockroaches, pet dander, and secondhand smoke trigger asthma attacks.
- Exposure to secondhand smoke can cause asthma in pre-school aged children.
- Exposure to dust mites can cause asthma.
- Ozone and particle pollution can cause asthma attacks.
 - * When ozone levels are high, more people with asthma have attacks that require a doctor's attention.
 - * Ozone makes people more sensitive to asthma triggers such as pet dander, pollen, dust mites, and mold.

Learn more at www.epa.gov/asthma

References

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