

Facts about Childhood Asthma in the U.S.

ASTHMA IS...

An epidemic.

- An estimated 22.2 million Americans had asthma in 2005, including 6.5 million children under 18 years of age.¹

The most common serious chronic disease of childhood.²

- In 2005, 8.9% of children currently had asthma.³

Under-treated and under-controlled.

- In 2003, 39% of children with asthma reported receiving an asthma management plan from their healthcare provider.³
- In 2000, fewer than half (42.3%) of children under age 18 who had an asthma attack in the previous year reported using an inhaled corticosteroid as recommended for long-term control of persistent asthma.⁴
- Asthma is uncontrolled in 85% of inner-city children who have asthma.⁵
- Among children with persistent asthma, only 20% have optimal control.⁶



In a classroom of 30 or more children, 2 or more children are likely to have asthma.

A major cause of morbidity.

- Nearly two of every three children who currently have asthma had at least one asthma attack in the past 12 months.³
- Asthma accounts for one-third of all pediatric emergency department visits.²
- Asthma is the third-ranking cause of hospitalization among children under 15.⁷

The leading cause of school absenteeism due to a chronic childhood condition.²

- In 2003, the 4 million children who had at least one asthma attack in the previous year missed an estimated 12.8 million school days due to asthma.¹

A major source of health disparities.

- Estimates from 2004-2005 indicate that asthma prevalence rates are higher among non-Hispanic black children (12.8%) and Puerto Rican children (19.2%) compared to non-Hispanic white children (7.9%).³
- Minority children also experience higher rates of emergency department (ED) visits, hospitalizations and deaths. For example, compared with white children, black children in 2003-2005 had a 260% higher ED visit rate, a 250% higher hospitalization rate, and a 500% higher death rate from asthma.³

Expensive.

- The estimated cost of treating asthma in those under 18 is \$3.2 billion per year.⁸



Asthma is a leading chronic illness among children and youth in the U.S. and one of the leading causes of school absences.

¹ Akinbami L. Asthma Prevalence, Health care use and mortality: United States, 2003-05, Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2006.

² U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Indoor Environments Division, Office of Air and Radiation (6609J). Asthma Facts. May 2007. EPA 402-F-04-019. www.epa.gov/asthma/pdfs/asthma_fact_sheet_en.pdf.

³ Akinbami LJ. The State of childhood asthma, United States, 1980-2005. Advance data from vital and health statistics; no 381, Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics. 2006.

⁴ Krauss NA. Statistical Brief #13 Asthma treatment: Use of medications and devices, 2000. Medical Expenditure Panel Survey, Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

⁵ Vargas PA, et al. Symptom profile and asthma control in school-age children. *Ann Allergy Asthma Immunol* 2006;96:787-793.

⁶ Halterman JS, Auinger P, Conn KM, Lynch K, Yoos HL, Szilagyi PG. Inadequate therapy and poor symptom control among children with asthma: Findings from a multistate sample. *Ambul Pediatr*. 2007 Mar-Apr;7(2):153-9.

⁷ Hall MJ, DeFrances CJ. 2001 National Hospital Discharge Survey. Advance data from vital and health statistics; no 332. Hyattsville, Maryland: National Center for Health Statistics. 2003, Table 3.

⁸ Popovic JC. 1999 National Hospital Discharge Survey: Annual summary with detailed diagnosis and procedure data. National Center for Health Statistics. *Vital Health Statistics* 2001;13(151):21, Table 10.