

Snapshot of Childhood Asthma in DC

- In 2003, an estimated 11.8% of DC children (more than one in ten) currently had asthma, compared with 8.8% of children nationally.¹
- An estimated 10,000² to 12,645¹ DC children under age 18 have asthma.
- From 2002 through 2006, DC children averaged more than 4,200 emergency department visits for asthma each year at DC hospitals.³
- Hospital admissions for asthma by DC children jumped from a recent low of 296 hospitalizations in 2004 to 512 hospitalizations in 2006.³
- Among a sample of 488 children seen for acute asthma care at DC's Children's National Medical Center, more than half had made 3 or more emergency department visits for asthma in the prior 12 months.⁴
- Emergency department visits for asthma among DC children are highest in the fall (September to November) with the second-highest peak occurring in the spring (March to May).⁵
- The 2002 rate of emergency department visits for asthma was nearly 12 times greater among children in DC's most disadvantaged areas than among its most affluent.⁴
- Most of DC's pediatric emergency department visits originate from five DC zip codes (20020, 20019, 20002, 20011, and 20032) that roughly correspond to Wards 4, 6, 7, and 8.⁵
- From 1995 through 2004, there were 14 deaths due to asthma among DC children aged 1 to 19 years.⁶



¹ American Lung Association. Trends in asthma morbidity and mortality. August 2007.

² Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America. The costs of asthma. 1998 estimates. www.aafa.org. Accessed August 30, 2004.

³ Teach SJ, Quint D. Asthma surveillance in DC emergency departments. Improving Pediatric Asthma Care in the District of Columbia (IMPACT DC), Children's National Medical Center. www.impact-dc.org/Surveillance.pdf.

⁴ IMPACT DC, Children's National Medical Center. www.impact-dc.org/Surveillance.html.

⁵ Babin SM, Burkom H, Taberner N, and Holtry RS. Asthma health outcomes report for the investigation of the linkage between ambient air quality and pediatric asthma emergency department visits in Washington, DC (Unpublished deliverable #2 to the District of Columbia Department of Health, Environmental Public Health Tracking Program). The Johns Hopkins University Applied Physics Laboratory. January 31, 2006.

⁶ Government of the District of Columbia, Department of Health. Personal correspondence with Maternal and Primary Care Administration. September 21, 2007.