



Helping You Live Healthier Every Day

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OFFICE OF PUBLIC HEALTH • Center for Health Policy, Information & Promotion

Asthma Program • (504) 599-1077

Asthma Program

Asthma in Louisiana

An estimated 200,000 adult Louisianans 18 years and older currently suffer with asthma (6.3% statewide vs. 7.0%, nationally). Additionally, asthma is the most common chronic disease among children affecting an estimated 4.8 million (6.9%) children under the age of 18 in the United States and results from the current state surveillance indicate that one in ten (10.7%) Louisiana households with children had at least one child who was asthmatic.

Data on asthma prevalence among adults in Louisiana were first collected in 1993 through state added questions in the Louisiana Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (LA-BRFSS). Louisiana was one of the first states to add the CDC optional module on asthma to its survey in 1999 and has continued to gather data every year on asthma since then.

For the four years (1999-2002) for which data are available on the prevalence of asthma in Louisiana, rates of current asthma have increased from 4.9% to 6.0%. A similar increase has been observed in the rates of ever asthma (9.1% to 10.4%). This increase can potentially indicate a trend towards a rise in the asthma prevalence in Louisiana. Data collected through the current state surveillance system indicates an association between socio-economic factors and the prevalence of asthma in Louisiana. Household income and employment appear to significantly influence the prevalence of asthma. Higher rates of asthma were observed in lower groups (<\$15,000 vs. >\$50,000) and among students and retired individuals compared to those employed. Demographically, females suffer from asthma more than males (7.2% vs. 4.7%) and blacks compared to whites (6.7% vs. 5.9%) were more likely to report being asthmatic. Age is also associated with asthma prevalence rates.

Among 12-16 year old public middle school students in Louisiana, the prevalence of lifetime asthma was 25.7% and overall current asthma prevalence was 17.4%. Females (19.6%) in this age group were more likely to be asthmatic compared to males (15.6%). A significantly higher proportion of the 12-14 year old students (17.8%) were current asthmatics compared to 15-16 year old students (12.8%).

TABLE 1. Estimated prevalence of current asthma among public middle school students in Louisiana – Louisiana Youth Tobacco Survey, 2000.

Characteristic	Current Asthma Prevalence	
	%	(c.i.,* n)
Overall Prevalence	17.4	(15.1 – 19.7, 448)
Race/Ethnicity		
White	18.0	(14.3 – 21.7, 237)
Black	16.8	(13.1 – 20.6, 181)
Gender		
Male	15.6	(13.1 – 18.1, 189)
Female	19.6	(16.4 – 22.8, 259)
Age		
12 – 14 years	17.8	(15.6 – 20.2, 415)
15 – 16 years	12.8	(8.3 – 17.3, 33)