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Vital Signs: Asthma Prevalence, Disease Characteristics, and Self-Management Education: United States, 2001--2009

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)

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Abstract

Background: Most persons with asthma can be symptom-free if they receive appropriate medical care, use inhaled corticosteroids when prescribed, and modify their environment to reduce or eliminate exposure to allergens and irritants. This report reviews recent progress in managing asthma and reducing its prevalence in the United States.

Methods: CDC analyzed asthma data from the 2001--2009 National Health Interview Survey concerning children and adults, and from the 2001, 2005, and 2009 state-based Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System concerning adults.

Results: Among persons of all ages, the prevalence of asthma increased from 7.3% (20.3 million persons) in 2001 to 8.2% (24.6 million persons) in 2009, a 12.3% increase. Prevalence among children (persons aged <18 years) was 9.6%, and was highest among poor children (13.5%) and among non-Hispanic black children (17.0%). Prevalence among adults was 7.7%, and was greatest in women (9.7%) and in adults who were poor (10.6%). More uninsured persons with asthma than insured could not afford to buy prescription medications (40.3% versus 11.5%), and fewer uninsured persons reported seeing or talking with a primary-care physician (58.8% versus 85.6%) or specialist (19.5% versus 36.9%). Among persons with asthma, 34.2% reported being given a written asthma action plan, and 68.1% had been taught the appropriate response to symptoms of an asthma attack. Only about one third of children or adults were using long-term control medicine such as inhaled corticosteroids at the time of the survey. **CONCLUSIONS AND COMMENT:** Persons with asthma need to have access to health care and appropriate medications and use them. They also need to learn self-management skills and practice evidence-based interventions that reduce environmental risk factors.

LinkOut - more resources

Full Text Sources

[CDC - Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report](#)

Medical

[ClinicalTrials.gov](#)

[Genetic Alliance](#)

[MedlinePlus Health Information](#)